THE COLLECTED WORKS OF MAHATMA GANDHI

XXII

(December 1921 - March 1922)

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PREFACE

The period covered in this volume, from December 15, 1921 to March 3, 1922 forms a distinct watershed in India's non-violent struggle for independence. When Gandhiji, on the very crest of a wave of successful insurrection, withdrew mass civil disobedience on account of mob violence at Chauri Chaura, he proved, convincingly and once for all, that for him non-violence was indeed an article of faith, not mere policy. "The drastic reversal of practically the whole of the aggressive programme may be politically unsound and unwise", he declared, "but there is no doubt that it is religiously sound . . . " (p. 417).

The volume opens with a call to the nation to supply men and women for imprisonment as fast as the Government could arrest them, and ends with an appeal to the members of the All-India Congress Committee "to be indifferent to the clamour for immediate action" and to concentrate on "self-purification, introspection, quiet organization" (p. 502). The writings in this volume trace the course of the changes of decision and explain Gandhiji's hesitation and misgivings ending up with the indefinite suspension of the civil disobedience programme.

Though Gandhiji's confidence in the country's readiness for non-violent mass civil disobedience had been shaken by the Bombay disturbances of November 17, the Government's indiscriminate arrests of leaders and other measures intended to suppress the Non-co-operation and Civil Disobedience movements left him with no choice but to revive the plan of individual and mass civil disobedience. He saw the action of the Government as a challenge to national self-respect and called upon the country to meet it as such. Addressing the Congress session at Ahmedabad on December 28, 1922 he said: "I am a man of peace . . . . but I do not want peace at any price. I do not want the peace that you find in stone; I do not want the peace that you find in the grave . . . " (p. 104). The British, who professed sincere interest in the constitutional advance of India towards responsible self-government, did not understand the new temper of the country in which it would no longer tolerate condescending patronage. Commenting on a speech of Lord Reading's, Gandhiji asked him to "understand that the non-co-operators are at war with the Government" (p. 28). For the immediate present, however, Gandhiji

wanted the people to concentrate on the vindication of the fundamental rights of free speech and free association. In this limited fight, he was anxious to win the support of the Moderates. He repeatedly urged non-co-operators to cultivate their goodwill, and himself attended the All-Parties Conference convened by Pandit Malaviya in Bombay to consider the possibility of a round table conference with the Government. Gandhiji described its outcome both as a success and a failure, "success in that it showed an earnest desire on the part of those who attended to secure a peaceful solution of the present trouble, and in that it brought together under one roof people possessing divergent views" (p. 214), and a failure because the gravity of the real issue did not seem to have been realized by all. A compromise resolution was passed by the Conference, and the Congress Working Committee responded favourably to it on Gandhiji's advice (pp. 210-1). He however, was not hopeful of positive results from the proposed round table conference. He knew the British temper well enough to be convinced that they would not yield except under sufficient pressure. "From that standpoint", he said, "I do consider the idea of the conference for devising a scheme of full swaraj premature. India has not yet incontestably proved her strength. Her suffering is great indeed, but nothing and not prolonged enough for the object in view" (p. 218).

The Government rejected the appeal for a round table conference and, thereupon, as contemplated in the Congress resolution passed at Ahmedabad in December 1921, Gandhiji decided to launch mass civil disobedience in Bardoli. He wrote to the Viceroy on February 1 to give notice of his intention and make a last appeal to the latter to end "the lawless repression", promising that, if the Government made the necessary declaration, he would advise the country to engage "in further moulding public opinion without violent restraint from either side and trust to its working to secure the fulfilment of its unalterable demands" (p. 305). Meanwhile, preparations for mass civil disobedience had been going on in Bardoli, and Gandhiji was satisfied that the people had practically fulfilled the conditions for such a campaign (p. 295). The Government, too, he declared, had acted with a most exemplary restraint. "I have watched their conduct with wonder and admiration. Both sides have up to the time of writing behaved in a manner worthy of chivalrous warriors of old" (p. 297). Gandhiji ended the article with a quotation from his favourite hymn, *Lead, Kindly Light.*

Then came the tragedy which Gandhiji called the "Crime of Chauri Chaura" (p. 415). On February 4, 1922, a procession at Chauri Chaura, in Gorakhpur district in U.P., under much provocation set fire to a police station, killed 21 policemen and burned their bodies (pp. 385 and 415). Gandhiji looked upon the incident as a "divine warning" (pp. 423-7) and promptly retraced his steps. At his instance, the Congress Working Committee passed resolutions on February 12 indefinitely suspending all forms of civil disobedience and advising people to concentrate on the constructive items of the Non-co-operation programme (pp. 377-81). The entire body of workers in Bardoli, young and old, who were getting ready for mass civil disobedience told Gandhiji that if he retreated after throwing out a challenge to the Government, the whole country would be disgraced before the world (p. 377). And in saying this they spoke for the nation. Gandhiji was aware of the national mood. Writing to Jawaharlal Nehru, who was in jail, Gandhiji said: "I see that all of you are terribly cut up over the resolution of the Working Committee" (p. 435). He stood firm, however, in the midst of the storm and refused to lead a movement "half violent and half non-violent, even though it might result in the attainment of so-called swaraj" (p. 351), for it would not be real swaraj as he had conceived it.

The resolutions of the Working Committee provoked "a hurricane of opposition" (p. 501.) at the All-India Congress Committee meeting in Delhi on February 24 and 25. Gandhiji warned the Committee. "I am incorrigible. . . . The only tyrant I accept in this world is the still small voice within" (p. 500). Although the A.I.C.C. adopted the resolution without material change, Gandhiji considered himself "a sadder and, I hope, a wiser man" (p. 500) at the end of the meeting. He had been aware for some time that all non-co-operators were not sincere in their adherence to non-violence even as a matter of policy. Writing to Jawaharlal Nehru after the suspension of the civil disobedience programme, he said: "I must tell you that this was the last straw. My letter to the Viceroy was not sent without misgivings as its language must make it clear to anyone. . . . With all this news in my possession and much more from the South, the Chauri Chaura news came like a powerful match to ignite the gunpowder and there was a blaze" (p.436). For months past he had engaged himself in educating public opinion on the absolute necessity of preserving an atmosphere of non-violence in the country and carrying out the constructive items of the Non-co-operation programme, namely, swadeshi, Hindu-

Muslim unity and eradication of untouchability. In his speeches and in his writings in *Young India* and *Navajivan*, he had repeatedly stressed the need for forbearance and self-restraint in the face of severest provocations from the Government, and for the utmost tolerance towards political opponents. Gandhiji's fears were not about the people themselves. In fact, he believed that the temper of non-violence was deeply ingrained in the Indian people by a long tradition of culture (p. 262). He found fault, however, with the non-co-operation workers. "It became clear to me that the workers were in no mood to do any serious work of construction. The constructive programme lent no enchantment. . . . They wanted to deliver 'non-violent' blows" (p. 501).

The indefinite suspension of the Civil Disobedience programme seemed to be a complete failure of Gandhiji's political leadership. Critics spoke of his "somersaults" (p. 494). This was not the first time that Gandhiji's faith was tested and strengthened by the humiliation of outward failure. From the beginning, he was sustained in all his public activities by his utter faith in God. The very first item in this volume contains an expression of this faith : "If we can but throw ourselves into His lap as our only Help, we shall come out scatheless through every ordeal that the Government may subject us to. . . . The way to stand erect before the tyrant is not to hate him, not to strike him, but to humble ourselves before God and cry out to Him in the hour of our agony" (p. 4). It was in this spirit that Gandhiji faced the present ordeal. The personal mortification was indeed great. " 'But what about your manifesto to the Viceroy and your rejoinder to his reply?' spoke the voice of Satan. It was the bitterest cup of humiliation to drink" (p. 416). However, the hesitations of the past few months were over and Gandhiji saw his way clear before him. "Let the opponent glory in our humiliation or so-called defeat . . . . "It is a million times better to *appear* untrue before the world than to *be* untrue to ourselves. . . . I must undergo personal cleansing. I must become a fitter instrument, able to register the slightest variation in the moral atmosphere around me. My prayers must have deeper truth and humility about them than they evidence" (p. 419). Accordingly, he undertook a penitential fast, as he had often done in the past. Writing to his youngest son, Devdas, on February 12, he explained the motive behind the fast: "It is the woman giving birth to a child who suffers the pains . . . I, too, wish to give birth to the ideals of non-violence and truth, so that I alone need bear the pains of fasting, etc." (p. 397).

The humility of spirit in which Gandhiji accepted the defeat of his political programme certainly did not mean the weakening of his determination to fight British rule in India till it was mended or ended. To the statements of Lord Birkenhead or Mr. Montagu, which made it plain to Indian nationalists that they should not expect India to be ever free, Gandhiji replied in words which recalled his mood in 1920 when, burning with indignation at the evils of the British rule, he had repeatedly described it as Satanic: "No empire intoxicated with the red wine of power and plunder of weaker races has yet lived long in this world, and this 'British Empire', which is based upon organized exploitation of physically weaker races of the earth and upon a continuous exhibition of brute force, cannot live if there is a just God ruling the universe. . . . I am aware that I have written strongly about the insolent threat that has come from across the seas, but it is high time that the British people were made to realize that the fight that was commenced in 1920 is a fight to the finish. . ." (p. 458). Soon after this, Gandhiji was arrested, and this article, "Shaking the Manes", was among the three which formed the basis of the indictment against him.

Though the non-co-operation struggle had divided families, Gandhiji saw to it, as the note on the Malaviyas proves, that there was "no gulf between father and son" (p. 164), that while the young people followed the dictates of conscience frankly and openly, they did not forfeit the blessings of their great-hearted elders. Thus, amid all the dust and heat of battle, he cherished the imperatives of personal friendship and family loyalty.

NOTE TO THE READER

In reproducing English material, every endeavour has been made to adhere strictly to the original. Obvious typographical errors have been corrected and words abbreviated in the text have generally been spelt out. Variant spellings of names have, however, been retained as in the original.

Matter in square brackets has been supplied by the Editors. Quoted passages, where these are in English, have been set up in small type and generally printed with indent. Indirect reports of speeches and passages which are not by Gandhiji have been set up in small type. In reports of speeches and interviews slight changes have sometimes been made in passages not attributed to Gandhiji.

While translating from the Gujarati or Hindi, efforts have been made to achieve fidelity and also readability in English. Where translations were available, these have been used with minimum necessary changes to bring them into conformity with the original.

The date of an item has been indicated at the top right-hand corner; if the original is undated, the inferred date is printed within square brackets giving reasons where necessary. The date given at the end of an item alongside the source is that of publication.

In the source-line, the symbol S.N. stands for documents available in the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi and Sangrahalaya, New Delhi; C.W. denotes documents secured by the Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi and N.A.I. to those in the National Archives of India.

References to Volume I of this series are to the August 1958 edition. References to *An Autobiography or the Story of My Experiments with Truth* cite only the Part and Chapter in view of the varying pagination in different editions.

The appendices provide background material relevant to the text. A list of sources and a chronology for the period covered by the volume are given at the end.

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CONTENTS

subsidiary object. The honour of their leaders requires the people of Calcutta to observe a complete hartal. It will be a proof of their confidence in their leaders and proof also of the exercise of their own free will. I am hoping that the people of Calcutta will not fail to do their obvious duty on the 24th instant. And now that their leaders are withdrawn from them, every non-co-operator will constitute himself a leader for keeping the peace. They cannot do better than simply keep themselves at home on the 24th except volunteers whose duty it will be to protect from harm those who may choose to open their shops. I assume that both the Congress and the Khilafat Committees have elected fresh office-bearers. Our true test is certainly now. The assumption of leadership today is like the assumption of Lord Mayorship by the late MacSwiney[1]. It carries with it the liability for immediate imprisonment. If the nation is truly awakened, there should be a ceaseless flow of leaders and men and women to be led. Our supply must always be equal to the demand made upon us by the Government. We win when we have established sufficient credit for ourselves for being able to cope with the demand.

The Use of It All

Let there be no doubt about the propriety of us all going to jail. If we are unable to meet the demand, let us be men enough to own that we are in a minority, and if we have faith in our programme, we must turn that minority into a majority not by preaching but by living up to our preaching. Let us realize the full force of the truth that an ounce of practice is worth tons of preaching. It is true economy to use all the resources we have instead of wasting time in acquiring fresh resources. The latter will come as we use what we have. Supposing, however, that we get no further response, let us rest assured that those who refuse to go to jail will find out their own way of work. It will be at least sincere. That part of India which believes in non-co-operation by suffering will have done its full share. If we go to jail fifty times and get no addition to our numbers, I hope still to be able to say, "We must repeat the performance till we have impressed the whole of India with the truth of our way." That is the way of religion and no other. We want swaraj for men who

[1] Irish patriot and Lord Mayor of Cork. He died in 1920 after a 65-day fast unto death for the emancipation of Ireland.

love and would suffer for freedom. We want to support the Khilafat[1] through such men, for they only are true Hindus, true Mussulmans and true Sikhs.

THE SIMPLE BEAUTY OF IT

To understand the simplicity of our programme is to realize its true beauty. There is nothing more to be done but to spin and court imprisonment, and spin even in the prisons if they will let us. Whilst we are spinning or going to jail we must retain the correct attitude of mind, i.e., of non-violence and friendliness between the various faiths. If we cease to hate Englishmen, co-operators and those who do not see eye to eye with us, if we cease to distrust or fear one another and if we are determined to suffer and work for the bread of the whole nation, i.e., spin, do we not see that no power upon earth can withstand us? And if we believe in ourselves what matters it whether we are few or many, or whether we are arrested or shot? And surely in all I have said I have presented a programme not for perfect men but for practical men who are good, true and brave. If we cannot even become good, true and brave, have we any right to talk of swaraj or religion? Can we call ourselves Hindus, Mussulmans, Christians, Jews, Sikhs, Parsis? Have we any business, if we are not that, to be talking of Khilafat and the Punjab?

GOVERNMENT NON-CO-OPERATION

Therefore, if we believe in our programme, we must not mind if the Government non-co-operate with us in every particular. I hear from Mr. Rajagopalachari[2] and Agha Safdar[3] that they are not permitted to send full telegrams. It is a surprise to me that they permit the transmission of any telegrams at all or let us travel or meet each other. Having made up my mind to expect the worst, nothing that the Government does in the shape of curbing our activity surprises or irritates me. It is struggling for its very existence and I feel that I would have done much the same that this Government is doing if I was in its place. Probably I should

[1] The Caliphate of Turkey. The object of the Khilafat movement was to ensure that the Sultan of Turkey was restored to the status which he enjoyed before World War I.

[2] Chakravarti Rajagopalachari (b. 1879); statesman and first Indian Governor-General

[3] President, Punjab Provincial Congress Committee, after Lala Lajpat Rai's arrest on December 3, 1921

do much worse. Why should we expect it to refrain from using the powers it has? Only we must find the means of living and carrying on our non-co-operation without its aid. We must keep our heads even if inter-provincial communication is denied to us. Having got our programme, each province must be able to carry on its own activity. Indeed, it may even be an advantage, for, in the event of communication being cut off, we should be unaffected by reverses in other provinces. Thus, for instance, the Punjab need not be affected by Gujarat weakening and surrendering body and soul to the Government or, say, Assam going stark mad or becoming unexpectedly violent. Let not the reader fear any such possibility, for, Assam is keeping exceptionally sane in spite of grave provocation and Gujarat will give, I hope, a good account of itself in the near future. The Government of Bombay probably knows its business better than others. It has certainly greater forbearance and tact. It is giving the non-co-operators as long a rope as they want. And as the latter do want to be hanged if they do not get what they want, they are taking the longest rope. But that is by the way. Clouds no bigger than a man's hand have a knack of appearing in the Indian horizon and all of a sudden assuming dangerous dimensions. The point I wish to drive home is that we must prepare ourselves against and for all complications and never be baffled by them, certainly never be taken aback when the expected happens.

Slow but Sure

If the luxury of wires be denied to us, we must manage with the post. If the postal communication be also stopped we must use messengers. Friends travelling to and from will oblige us. When the use of the railways is denied, we must use other methods of conveyance. No amount of slowness imposed fro without can checkmate us, if we are sure within. "Rock of ages, cleft for me, Let me hide myself in Thee" is a prayer common to all religions. If we can but throw ourselves into His lap as our only Help, we shall come out scatheless through every ordeal that the Government may subject us to. If nothing happens without His permitting, where is the difficulty in believing that He is trying us even through this Government? I would take our complaints to Him and be angry with Him for so cruelly trying us. And He will soothe us and forgive us, if we will but trust Him. The way to stand erect before the tyrant is not to hate him, not to strike him but to humble ourselves before God and cry out to Him in the hour of our agony.

FROM AGHA SAFDAR

Here are two beautiful letters[1] from Agha Safdar showing how the brave Punjabis are being hampered and tried and proving themselves true, how the gallant Sikhs are defying the whole strength of the Government stupidly directed against its erstwhile noblest friends and supporters, and how all the Punjab leaders are working with one mind and how they are all keeping an unruffled temper in the midst of exceptional difficulty. But let the great and good Agha Saheb speak for himself and his proud though much afflicted Punjab :

I

. . . You must have learnt through the Associated Press the circumstances under which the arrests were made. Lalaji[2] wished very much to abide by your wishes and not court arrest, but it could not be helped, and he, being the President of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee, could not stay away from the meeting. The meeting was called immediately after the orders were passed stopping public meetings and disbanding Volunteer Corps, . . .[3] The District Magistrate stopped the meeting labelling it as seditious, but as the order was illegal it was decided not to obey it.

Lalaji, Santanam[4], Gopichand[5] and Lal Khan are now in the Central Jail. They are happy and contented. Beddings and books were supplied to them but they declined to take food from outside and are having the jail food.

The case is coming up for hearing on 7th December and it is said the trial is to take place under Sec. 145 I.P.C. . . .

[1] Only excerpts reproduced here

[2] Lala Lajpat Rai (1865-1928); Nationalist leader of the Punjab

[3] Following the disturbances in Bombay on November 17, 1921, "Local Governments were . . . informed that for the purpose of checking the increasing volume of inflammatory speeches the application of Seditious Meetings Act . . . would be sanctioned . . . also . . . Part II of the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1908 should be vigorously employed for combating the illegal activities of volunteer associations, whose drilling, picketing and intimidation were threatening peace of the country. . . . The Government of India . . . instructed the provincial administrations to deal promptly with incitements to violence, to sedition, to the inception of civil disobedience." *India in 1921-22*

[4] K. Santanam; politician and lawyer; Secretary of the Sub-Committee appointed by the Congress to report on the Punjab disorders of 1919

[5] Dr. Gopichand Bhargava (b. 1890); entered politics under Lala Lajpat Rai; imprisoned during 1942-3; Chief Minister, Punjab

The whole of the province is quiet and peaceful. We are laying stress upon khadi and boycott of *videshi*[1] cloth. . . .

Our *Khalsa*[2] friends are still busy holding public meetings at Amritsar but no further arrests are being made. Total arrests have been 21 out of whom 11 have already been convicted. Similar divans have commenced meeting in Lahore and so far one arrest has been made.

We are all trying our best to keep a non-violent atmosphere and have every hope to succeed, as people are gradually imbibing the spirit and are keeping under control even under provocative circumstances. . . .

II

I hope you have got my letter I wrote to you this morning. A public meeting was advertised at 4 p.m. in the Bradlaugh Hall which was to be presided over by S. Prem Singh Sodhbans. Strong police force with lathis and rifles surrounded the hall and all the approaches thereto by two noon and kept the guard till after 4 p.m. None was permitted to enter the premises. . . . S. Prem Singh arrived by 3.30 p.m. but was stopped by the police force and ordered to clear off by a European police officer. He turned round along with the crowd and held a meeting at some distance passing a resolution congratulating Lalaji and his comrades, and then dispersed the meeting. The whole affair ended quietly. . . . I have, however, just heard that a student was badly beaten by a police constable and is lying in the hospital in a precarious state. Pandit Rambhaj Dutt has just gone out to see him.

Lalaji and others were interviewed in the jail yesterday. They are all keeping good spirits. Treatment accorded to them has not been exceptional. They are all kept in separate cells and are living on jail food. . . .

At Amritsar, I hear from Girdharilal, there has happened something untoward. Sikhs were peacefully holding their public meeting when all of a sudden a few sadhus appeared on the spot and began beating promiscuously with their iron sticks. The Sikhs remained non-violent and got a few persons injured. Simultaneously, with the advent of the sadhus there appeared the Deputy Commissioner along with police and military force on the spot. The Deputy Commissioner was permitted entrance. But the Sikh leader, Gnani Sher Singh, refused official intervention and declined any help from the Deputy Commissioner. The position is said to be well in hand and no further violence is reported.

. . . It is just reported that the student maltreated by the police is feeling well.

Nothing that I can add can enhance the beauty of the simple narrative given by the Agha Saheb. I have not altered a single

[1] Foreign

[2] Literally, pure. A name given to the Sikhs

word in the two letters. I bow in reverence to Lalaji and his comrades who refused even whilst under trial anything but jail food, and I tender my congratulations to Sardar Prem Singh Sodhbans who conducted the meeting with such calm dignity in defiance of the magisterial order and in the face of the provoking presence of the police. I congratulate the young volunteer with his broken head. The serious affray at Amritsar must await separate treatment when full details are available. There seems little doubt that the Sikhs have behaved with wonderful courage and restraint. When born fighters become non-violent, they exhibit courage of the highest order. The Sikhs have historical evidence of such exhibition in their midst. They are now repeating their own history. Let me hope and pray that they will carry out the instructions of Sardar Khadag Singh[1] to remain non-violent to the end, to become simple in their tastes and wear only khadi.

In the Absence of President

The arrest of our President elect need not perturb us. His spirit will preside over our deliberations. We know what message he has for the country. He has become the living embodiment of it. We must elect some one to act for him out of the remnant that is permitted to meet at the Congress. Certainly no Congress has ever met under happier auspices than this will. What seemed impossible has been rendered almost possible by the welcome repression of the Government. That many of the best of us are in jail is swaraj. I would call it the fullest swaraj if the Government simply invited every non-co-operator to offer himself on or before the 26th instant at the nearest police-station for arrest and imprisonment to be under custody till he has apologized for his non-co-operation or till the Government feels the necessity for repentance. I would forego the Congress in spite of Vallabhbhai Patel[2] and his devoted band working night and day to make the reception of the delegates and visitors worthy of the capital of Gujarat. For me any such order of the Government will be complete swaraj. It will be good for the Government to rid itself of non-co-operators and it will give the latter their heart's desire. Their formula is swaraj or jail. But in the absence of any such new year's gift from the Government, we may be certainly thankful for the small

[1] A Congress leader of the Punjab

[2] 1875-1950; Congress leader from Gujarat; first Deputy Prime Minister of free India

mercies they have favoured us with. I give below the list of the biggest prisoners I could think of as having won their spurs during the past few days :

LAHORE

Lala Lajpat Rai
K. Santanam
Dr. Gopichand
Malik Lal Khan
Dr. Satyapal
Dr. Gurbakshrai
S. E. Stokes

AJMER

Maulana Mainuddin
Mirza Abdul Kadir Beg
Hafiz Sultan Hasan
Maulvi Abdul Kadir Bodhari
Maulvi Abdulla
Sayed Abbas Ali
Maulvi Nuruddin

ALLAHABAD

Pandit Motilal Nehru
Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru
Pandit Shyamlal Nehru
Pandit Mohanlal Nehru
Purushottamdas Tandon
Gaurishanker Mishra
Pandit Kapildev Malaviya
Maulana Sherar
N. Sherwani
Kamaluddin Jafferi
Ranendranath Basu
George Joseph
K. B. Mathur

LUCKNOW

Harkaran Nath Mishra
Chaudhary Khaliquzzaman
Sheikh Mahomed Shaukatali
Dr. Shiv Narain Saksena
Pandit Balmukund Vajpai
Maulana Salamatullah
Mohanlal Saksena
Dr. Lakshmisahai
Hakim Abdul Wali
Lal Bahadur Shripati

BENGAL

C. R. Das
Master C. R. Das
Akram Khan
Sasmal
Jitendralal Banerji
Maulana Abul Kalam Azad
Padmaraj Jain
Maulana Abdul Muswir-Sylhet

DELHI

Shankarlal
Asaf Ali

ASSAM

T. R. Phooken
N. C. Bardolai
Bishnu Ram Mehdi
Kaladhar Chaliha
R. K. Chaudhary
Mahibuddin

MADRAS

Venkatasubbayya
Lakshminarasinham

I have given the names from memory. The list is not exhaustive, I know, but it may not be even fully representative. It is, however, sufficiently illustrative of the temper of the country. It is to me an eloquent demonstration of the fitness of the country for swaraj if my standard be accepted, viz., those who are prepared to suffer are the fittest for self-government.

Bengal's Duty

Bengal's duty is clear. It has to return a fitting answer to the arrest of the President elect and other chosen leaders. The arrest of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad is an event of importance equal with the arrest of the President elect. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad has an all-India reputation, especially among the Mussulmans. He is a seasoned soldier having been interned for years in Ranchi. He stands high in the ranks of the learned men of Islam. His arrest must sink deep in the hearts of the Mussulmans of India. What answer will the Hindus and Mussulmans of Bengal return? Action can only be answered by counter-action. We know what the answer should be. Will the thousands of Bengali Hindus and Bengali Mussulmans enrol themselves as volunteers and be arrested? Will Bengal wear only khadi or nothing? Will Bengali students give the answer that the President of the Congress expected from them in his moving appeal?

Triumph of Non-violence

I take it for granted that the Hindus and Mussulmans of Calcutta in particular and Bengal in general will keep absolutely quiet. If the present calm is an index for the future, the evil done by Bombay has been almost entirely undone.[1] The lesson of Bombay has gone home. It must abide for all time. Let the young men of Calcutta rally round the leaders who are left. Let them not be impatient. Let them keep their heads cool and their hands on the spinning-wheel. Every non-co-operator must find himself and herself on the register of volunteers, and the list should be day after day published in the Press so as to make it easy for the Government to arrest whomsoever they choose. The splendid emotion of Bengal should be translated at this supreme juncture in our national history into cool energy of the highest order. No bluster, no fuss, no bravado. Only religious devotion to the cause and a fixed determination to do or die.

[1] The reference evidently is to the riots in Bombay on November 17, 1921, the day the Prince of Wales arrived there.

To All Congress Officials

I invite all Congress secretaries to send me a list of imprisonments to date and the appointment of new secretaries and chairmen in the place of those arrested, and send me, if need be, daily a diary of events in the same admirable manner that Agha Safdar has done. I would like them to be brief and to the point and write only on one side of the paper in a clear hand so as to enable me to print with ease what may be considered necessary.

All-India Congress Committee

The eventful meeting of this Committee takes place on the 24th instant. On its decision will rest the future programme. Every member who can will, I hope, attend the meeting. Every member will be expected to give his own independent opinion. To give one's opinion is to act according to it. No mechanical majority is of value at this moment of national history. If we vote for a particular programme we must have faith in it and we must be prepared to enforce it at the risk of our lives. We must widen the gates of prisons and we must enter them as a bridegroom enters the bride's chamber. Freedom is to be wooed only inside prison walls and sometimes on the gallows, never in the council chambers, courts or the schoolroom. Freedom is the most capricious jilt ever known to the world. She is the greatest temptress most difficult to please. No wonder she builds her temples in jails or on inaccessible heights and laughs at us as we attempt to scale the prison wall or (in the hope of reaching her temple on some Himalayan height) wade through hills and dales strewn with thorns. The members of the Committee must, therefore, come with a fixed purpose whatever it may be. It is well with us if not believing in courting imprisonment we own the fact and suggest other remedies. I would decline, if I was the only one, to give my vote for prisons, if I did not believe in them at this stage or any other. And I would vote, without faltering, for them if I believed in them and even though I had no supporter. No leisurely programme can meet the situation. We who are outside the prison walls have constituted ourselves trustees for those who are inside those life-giving walls and we best discharge our trust by imitating our principals and getting inside those walls, throwing the burden of the trust on our successors.

The Working Committee

This outgoing Committee will meet for the last time under most trying circumstances. Of the fifteen members Deshbandhu

Das, Lala Lajpat Rai, Pandit Motilal Nehru[1] and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad who was just appointed at Delhi in the place of Maulana Mahomed Ali[2] will be absent being His Majesty's guests in some of those hotels called prisons. I, therefore, suggest that the provinces from which these patriots come should send one representative each a day earlier so that they may at least give the benefit of their advice to the Committee although they may not vote thereat. I would suggest to the other provinces also which are not directly represented on the Committee to send one representative each to guide the deliberations of the Committee.

Winter in Ahmedabad

Friends have asked me to draw the attention of delegates and visitors to the fact that the climate is not quite so mild as in Bombay nor so severe as in Delhi or Amritsar. It is necessary for them to bring a moderate supply of winter clothing. As chairs have been dispensed with in the Congress *pandal*[3], delegates will be supplied with khadi bags at a nominal price to keep their shoes in, but it is open to them to bring their own bags. It will be most inadvisable to leave shoes outside the *pandal* and after much deliberation the Reception Committee has decided not to make any arrangements for taking custody of the shoes of those who wish to leave them outside. At the Khilafat Conferences it is usual for people to carry their shoes in pieces of paper or otherwise. The bags are a most convenient and useful contrivance to meet the difficulty. The Reception Committee is making elaborate preparations for electric lighting, water-pipes and latrines so that the health and comforts of delegates may be as fully conserved as is possible in the circumstances. But I must not anticipate the comforts or discomforts that are being provided by the Reception Committee.

Resignations

One reads in the papers lists of resignations by Government servants in all Departments. A copy of one such resignation has been sent to me from Belgaum. The Head Clerk to the Assistant Director of Public Health has tendered his resignation as a protest against the conviction of Gangadharrao Deshpande[4], the leader

[1] 1861-1931; lawyer and politician; twice President of the Indian National Congress

[2] 1878-1931; brother of Shaukat Ali and a prominent leader of the Khilafat movement

[3] A covered enclosure erected for special occasions

[4] Prominent politician, known as the "Lion of Karnatak"

of Karnatak. In his resignation he described his own personal grievance but that was not sufficient inducement for him to leave Government service. In Assam quite a number of pleaders have suspended practice as a protest against the repressive policy of the local Government. I trust that these instances of resignations and suspensions will multiply.

A Crop of Difficulties

A Bihar correspondent, who gives his name, writes as follows:[1]

> . . . I had sided with non-co-operation with the full belief that it was religiously compulsory upon every Moslem. I never deceived myself with any hope of India's regeneration through non-co-operation. . . . I do not mean that I consider non-co-operation to be less effective but I do most strongly say that our countrymen are not capable of adhering to it with perfect non-violence. . . . I think the morale of the country has so far deteriorated that it is beyond possibility that our present generation can effectively practise non-co-operation with non-violence. Is it not strange that a responsible leader like yourself could shut his eyes to this apparent and abject condition of things?
>
> . . . after so much evidence of failures, why do you still stick to dating the advent of swaraj by months? If it was only to rouse the teeming masses, I am afraid the idea was not well conceived as is clear from recent happenings. To give out absurd hopes is nothing but playing with people's passion.
>
> . . . Let us first train the countrymen and then march them to do battle. We have begun the fight with bad soldiers. . . .
>
> I should like to hear through *Young India* your views.

He is a well-known Bihari. There is no doubt about his honesty. I, therefore, gladly respond to his suggestion to give a public reply to his letter. Though non-co-operation was, in the first instance, conceived in connection with the Khilafat, neither I nor my first associates ever thought that non-co-operation with the British Government involved any sacrifice whatsoever of the country's interests. On the contrary, we believed that if we could compel surrender to the just demands of the Mussulmans of India regarding the Khilafat, we could also compel surrender in the matter of the Punjab and, consequently, in the matter of swaraj. Non-violence was believed from the very commencement to be an integral part of non-co-operation, and if the former failed the latter failed *ipso facto*. Indeed the recent happenings have furnished abundant proof of the progress of non-violence. They

[1] Only excerpts reproduced here

show, I hope conclusively, that Bombay's aberration was an isolated instance in no way symptomatic of the general condition of the country. A year ago, it would have been impossible for the Government to arrest so many leaders of the front rank in so many parts of the country leaving the people absolutely self-controlled. It would be a mistake to suppose that it is the machine-gun which has kept all the people under restraint. No doubt it has its share, but he who runs may see that there are hundreds, if not thousands, of people in India today to whom machine-guns have ceased to be a terror. Nor can I subscribe to the doctrine that the country has suffered deterioration. On the contrary, every province can demonstrate the marvellous revolution brought about by this movement of purification in the lives of people. A distinguished Mussulman friend was telling me only the other day how the younger generation of Mussulmans was reclaimed from a life of indolent and atheistical luxury to one of religious simplicity and industry.

We are certainly in a hurry to get swaraj. Who can help it? Were the Moplahs in the death wagon in a hurry when in their asphyxiated state they were crying out for a breath of fresh air and a drink of water?[1] The death wagon of foreign domination in which we are suffering from moral asphyxiation is infinitely worse than the Moplah death wagon. And the wonder is that all these long years we have not felt the want of the oxygen of liberty. But having known our state, is it not most natural for us to cry out for the fresh air of swaraj? I am unable to accept any blame for having set the time-limit. I would have been wrong not to do so, knowing as I did that if the people fulfilled the conditions which were capable of easy fulfilment, swaraj was a certainty inside of twelve months. If the atmosphere of non-violence is truly established, I make bold to say that we shall achieve the substance even during the remaining days of this year, though we might have to wait for the form yet a while. The time-limit was not fixed in order to rouse the teeming millions, but it was fixed in order to rivet the attention of Congressmen and Congresswomen on their sense of immediate duty and on the grand consequence of its fulfilment. Without the time-limit we would not have collected the crore nor would we have introduced so many spinning-wheels, nor manufactured thousands of rupees worth of

[1] The Moplahs, Muslims settled in Malabar, rose in revolt in August 1921 and looted Hindus and committed arson and murder. On November 19, about 70 Moplahs died of asphyxiation while being conveyed by train to Bellary for imprisonment.

hand-spun khadi and distributed lakhs amongst the poorest workers in the country. It is not a sign of bad soldiery to find Bengal, the United Provinces, and the Punjab supplying prisoners as fast as Government can take them. And, when the word is passed round the other provinces for repression of a violent type, I doubt not that they will shine just as brilliantly as the three fortunate ones I have mentioned.

SOME PROOFS

The following letter[1] from the surviving Secretary of the U.P. Provincial Congress Committee, Mr. Jiaram Saksena, speaks for itself:

> Of all the local office-bearers of the U.P. Provincial Congress Committee, I am the only unfortunate Secretary who is yet out of jail. It has, therefore, fallen to my lot to inform you of what has recently happened here.
>
> The Provincial Congress Committee office was searched at about midnight and the registers of the U.P. Congress Committee, Executive Council and other subordinate bodies were taken away by the Deputy Superintendent of Police who conducted the search. Besides, the Khilafat Committee office and the houses of the gentlemen arrested were searched.
>
> We have now started civil disobedience in Allahabad in an organized and systematic form. National Volunteers are being briskly recruited. . . . Yesterday a batch of a dozen volunteers was sent out for a round in the city with national badges on their arms, singing patriotic songs. . . . none was taken in custody. . . . Today the same batch with another of a dozen volunteers paraded the town. . . . No arrests took place today. . . .

Of equal value is the following from a Lahore correspondent:[2]

> The general atmosphere is very good. People are fearless and non-violent. The City Congress Committees are sending out volunteers to hold meetings in different parts of the town at the same hour, to read out the same written speech, and to sing the same song and disperse within ten or fifteen minutes. Yesterday (the 8th instant) twenty such meetings were held in twenty centres . . . Fear of arrest or the jail is gone.

Surely, this is a record of which any country would be proud.

LEST WE FORGET

The same Lahore correspondent, however, regretfully mentions that the khadi movement has suffered a set-back and that khadi

[1] & [2] Only excerpts reproduced here

s not so much in evidence in Lahore as it used to be some time ago. If this is so, it is a bad sign. A mere filling of the jails will not answer the whole purpose. If India does not return to swadeshi, no amount of going to jail will make her self-contained or fill the mouths of the hungry millions. Without the four vital parts of the programme, which are meant not for particular classes but for all, we cannot establish swaraj. The reader must not be tired of my repetition of them: Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Parsi, Christian, Jew unity; swadeshi, i.e., manufacture and use of hand-spun khadi to the exclusion of all foreign cloth; removal of untouchability by Hindus; and observance of non-violence by all. These are like the four posts of a bedstead. Remove one of them and it cannot stand.

Ban on Khadi Cap

A friend has sent me papers in connection with a tussle that a local pleader is having with a Sub-Judge of Devrukh in the District of Ratnagiri over his khadi cap. Mr. J.V. Vaidya, the local pleader in question, had the following order passed against him by the Sub-Judge :

> Mr. Vaidya has appeared in Court today in a khadi cap, commonly known as the "Gandhi cap". In conformity with the views of the High Court as expressed in the recent letter of the Chief Justice addressed to the District Judge, Ratnagiri, extract of which was forwarded to the Devrukh Bar, I have told Mr. Vaidya that I consider his appearance today in a khadi cap as amounting to disrespect of the Court and have ordered him to leave the Court at once and not to appear again before this Court in a cap unless and until the District Judge or the High Court directs otherwise. I have also warned him that if he appears in a cap after this order, he will expose himself to all the consequences of a contempt of Court. A copy of the statement of Mr. Vaidya and of this order will be forwarded to the District Judge for such action as he may deem fit to take in the matter.

The following is a copy of the extracts from the Chief Justice's letter for communication to the Bar:

> The High Court is decidedly against the wearing of Gandhi caps in Court by pleaders and would consider any pleader wearing a Gandhi cap in Court as guilty of disrespect to the Judge.
>
> We hope that the good sense of the pleaders will prevail provided they know what the views of the High Court are.
>
> No pleader should appear in Court if he wears any head-dress except a turban.

> Please inform these pleaders that the High Court strongly disapproves of their conduct.

To this the Sub-Judge appended the following hope:

> The undersigned hopes that the pleaders will conform to the views of the High Court herein expressed and that there would be no occasion for the undersigned to enforce them in this Court.

Side by side with a discussion of matters of urgency, I do not hesitate to occupy the space at my disposal for discussion of an order which affects only a few pleaders. But the principle underlying this war against khadi caps is of the highest importance. It shows how innocent but moral and economic movements are attempted to be killed by their adversaries. Surely, the Chief Justice outside his official position could not possibly take exception to a headgear which is accepted as respectable by thousands of men all over India occupying a high station in life. Nor do pleaders who adopt the national cap do so out of any disrespect for the Court, but they do it out of respect for themselves and the nation to which they belong. They do it because they do not wish to conceal their religion or their politics, whichever way one regards the adoption of the khadi cap. A man who does not respect himself becomes menial. Are pleaders menials or officers of the High Courts? Custodians as they claim to be of the people's liberty, are they to submit to a deprivation of their own? I understand that Mr. Vaidya has decided to give up his practice, if he cannot carry it on with dignity and self-respect. He has, therefore, lodged a protest against the order, ceased to appear before the Sub-Judge till the matter is decided in his favour. And I learn further that the other members of the local Bar are also conferring among themselves as to the steps to be taken for vindicating their honour and freedom of action in the matter of dress. One does hope that when pleaders are unable to suspend practice or students to withdraw from Government schools and colleges, they will at least put up a brave fight in order to sustain their own personal honour even as the medical students of Vizagapatam have done.

Kripalani and Co.

A telegram has been received from Banaras advising me that Professor Kripalani[1] and fifteen members of his Ashram have been

[1] Acharya J. B. Kripalani (b. 1888); took part in Champaran and Non-co-operation movements; Lecturer, Benares Hindu University, 1918-20; started Gandhi Ashram for khadi and village work in 1920; Principal, Gujarat Vidyapith, 1922-7; President, Indian National Congress, 1946

arrested. The sacrifice of the innocents is proceeding apace. Professor Kripalani is an educationist who has identified himself with his pupils. He has a number of devoted pupils whose character has been transformed by his touch. He implicitly believes in non-violence to which he has come by laborious processes. He has been devoting his own and his pupils' energy to the development of the constructive side of swadeshi, and has been conducting an ideal institution in Banaras. He had reduced his wants to the barest necessaries of life and has been living with his pupils sharing with them the drudgery of the institution as also its privileges which mainly consist in his own inspiring company to his pupils. I have no advice as yet as to why he and fifteen of his pupils have been arrested. I dare say it is for volunteering. For, he is not the man to shirk danger. Anyway, he has led the way for other such institutions. Let the purest-minded become volunteers and be imprisoned. The instruction of the Working Committee in this matter must be strictly followed. The purest-minded alone are fit to go to jail as civil resisters and no other. If we have been lax hitherto, let us be rigorously strict in our selection. I fervently hope that those who have not clean minds or who do not believe in non-violence or swadeshi or any vital part of non-co-operation, will refrain from applying. They will serve by their abstention.

Sword-sticks

Whilst considering the question of selection of volunteers, I was grieved to learn that there were places in Calcutta in which sword-sticks and such other weapons were found. Soldiers of non-violence should have neither sticks nor swords. We must eschew every symbol of violence whilst our weapon is non-violence. As Chhotani Mian[1] in his manifesto very properly says, we must not even think of violence.

Ireland and India

Lord Reading has flung Ireland in our faces. Let us contemplate for a moment that romantic nation. I would like the reader to believe with me that it is not the blood that the Irishmen have taken which has given them what appears to be their liberty. But it is the gallons of blood that they have willingly given themselves. It is not the fear of losing more lives that has compelled a reluctant offer from England but it is the shame of any further imposition of agony upon a people that loves its liberty above everything else. It is the magnitude of the Irish sacrifice

[1] A Nationalist Muslim leader of Bombay

which has been the deciding factor. The late President Kruger[1], when with a handful of his undisciplined countrymen he hurled his ultimatum against the British Empire, said he would stagger humanity. He meant that he would sacrifice every Boer man, woman and child and leave not a single Boer heart to subdue, but he would gladly let Englishmen roam about the desert soil of South Africa dyed with the blood of the Boer martyrs. And England yielded when she was tired of concentration camps in which Boer women and children died like flies, and then she was choked with the bloody feast that the Boers had provided for her. And even so has Ireland been staggering humanity for many a long year. And England has yielded when she is able no longer to bear the sight of blood pouring out of thousands of Irish arteries. I know for certain that it is not legal subtleties, discussions on academic justice or resolutions of councils and assemblies that will give us what we want. We shall have to stagger humanity even as South Africa and Ireland have been obliged to. Only instead of repeating South African and Irish histories non-co-operators are learning from the living examples of these two nations the art of spilling their own blood without spilling that of their opponents. If they could do that, they could attain swaraj within a few days or a few months. But if they want slavishly to follow South Africa and Ireland, Heaven help India. Then there is no swaraj during the present generation. And I know that the swaraj promised by Mr. Montagu[2], no matter how well-intentioned he may be, will turn out to be a delusion and a snare. Councils are no factories for making stout hearts. And freedom is miasma without stout hearts to defend it.

WHAT IS SWARAJ?

The Times of India questions whether I have any clear notion of swaraj. If the writer will go through the back numbers of *Young India*, he will find a complete answer to the question. But I may mention here briefly that the least that swaraj means is a settlement with the Government in accordance with the wishes of the chosen representatives of the people. Therefore, the Congress representatives, if they can make good their claim by providing an inexhaustible supply of prisoners, will have a determining voice in any settlement that may be made. Swaraj, therefore, means the capacity of the people of India to enforce their demands. I totally dissent from the Viceroy's view that swaraj must come from the British

[1] 1825-1904; President of the Transvaal, 1883-1900

[2] E. S. Montagu (1879-1924); Secretary of State for India, 1917-22 and co-sponsor of Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms

Parliament, unless it comes through the sword. The British Parliament will only ratify the people's wish when the "sword" has made it irresistible. Non-co-operators are trying to use the sword of self-sacrifice in preference to that of steel. India's soul is pitted against British steel. We shall not have to wait long to know what popular swaraj is.

Work in Jails

An esteemed friend asks me whether, now that the Government have provided an opportunity for hundreds to find themselves imprisoned and as thousands are responding, it would not be better for the prisoners to refuse to do any work in the jails at all. I am afraid that suggestion comes from a misapprehension of the moral position. We are not out to abolish jails as an institution. Even under swaraj we would have our jails. Our civil disobedience, therefore, must not be carried beyond the point of breaking the unmoral laws of the country. Breach of the laws to be civil assumes the strictest and willing obedience to the jail discipline because disobedience of a particular rule assumes a willing acceptance of the sanction provided for its breach. And immediately a person quarrels both with the rule and the sanction for its breach, he ceases to be civil and lends himself to the precipitation of chaos and anarchy. A civil resister is, if one may be permitted such a claim for him, a philanthropist and a friend of the State. An anarchist is an enemy of the State and is, therefore, a misanthrope. I have permitted myself to use the language of war because the so-called constitutional method has become so utterly ineffective. But I hold the opinion firmly that civil disobedience is the purest type of constitutional agitation. Of course it becomes degrading and despicable if its civil, i.e., non-violent character is a mere camouflage. If the honesty of non-violence be admitted, there is no warrant for condemnation even of the fiercest disobedience because of the likelihood of its leading to violence. No big or swift movement can be carried on without bold risks and life will not be worth living if it is not attended with large risks. Does not the history of the world show that there would have been no romance in life if there had been no risks? It is the clearest proof of a degenerate atmosphere that one finds respectable people, leaders of society raising their hands in horror and indignation at the slightest approach of danger or upon an outbreak of any violent commotion. We do want to drive out the beast in man, but we do not want on that account to emasculate him. And in the process of finding his own status, the beast in him is bound now and

again to put up his ugly appearance. As I have often stated in these pages what strikes me down is not the sight of blood under every conceivable circumstance. It is blood spilt by the non-co-operator or his supporters in breach of his declared pledge which paralyses me, as I know it ought to paralyse every honest non-co-operator.

Therefore, to revert to the original argument, as civil resisters we are bound to guard against universal indiscipline. Jail discipline must be submitted to until jail Government itself becomes or is felt to be corrupt and immoral. But deprivation of comfort, imposition of restriction and such other inconveniences do not make jail Government corrupt. It becomes that when prisoners are humiliated or treated with inhumanity as when they are kept in filthy dens or are given food unfit for human consumption. Indeed, I hope that the conduct of non-co-operators in the jail will be strictly correct, dignified and yet submissive. We must not regard jailers and warders as our enemies but as fellow human beings not utterly devoid of the human touch. Our gentlemanly behaviour is bound to disarm all suspicion or bitterness. I know that this path of discipline on the one hand and fierce defiance on the other is a very difficult path, but there is no royal road to swaraj. The country has deliberately chosen the narrow and the straight path. Like a straight line it is the shortest distance. But even as you require a steady and experienced hand to draw a straight line, so are steadiness of discipline and firmness of purpose absolutely necessary if we are to walk along the chosen path with an unerring step.

I am painfully conscious of the fact that it is not going to be a bed of roses for any of the civil resisters. And my head reels and the heart throbs when I recall the lives of Motilal Nehru and C. R. Das in their palatial rooms surrounded by numerous willing attendants and by every comfort and convenience that money can buy and when I think of what is in store for them inside the cold unattractive prison walls where they will have to listen to the clanking of the prisoner's chains in the place of the sweet music of their drawing-rooms. But I steel my heart with the thought that it is the sacrifice of just such heroes that will usher in swaraj. The noblest of South Africans, Canadians, Englishmen, Frenchmen, Germans have had to undergo much greater sacrifices than we have mapped out for ourselves.

Agha Saheb Safdar

No telegram but a letter has been just received that the Agha Saheb was arrested at Sialkot on the 10th instant whilst he was on

a flying visit there. He was followed by a dense crowd. The Agha Saheb refused to be arrested unless there was a warrant or he was forced. At last the Magistrate had to come and order his arrest. The Agha Saheb obeyed this cheerfully though the Magistrate was not able to say why he was being arrested. As soon as the jail gates were opened, some of the crowd rushed in and asked to be arrested also together with the Agha Saheb. These intruders were naturally driven out. My correspondent tells me also that the Magistrate was insulted by the crowd. I congratulate the Agha Saheb but I cannot congratulate the crowd which had no business to follow the Agha Saheb. Those who entered the jail were guilty of misbehaviour in terms of the pledge of non-violence and those who insulted the Magistrate damaged the cause which they sought to espouse and were guilty not only of a breach of their pledge but of cowardice. The police party, I understand, was small. The officer in charge, I understand, behaved courteously. Probably relying upon our non-violence, the Magistrate was insufficiently protected. I warn the non-co-operators that any deviation from our pledge will postpone the advent of swaraj, which seems to be rushing towards us. "non-violence in thought, word or deed" must be our motto.

I understand that the Agha Saheb appointed Lala Dunichand as his successor[1] in office. I wish the new President the same good luck that has blessed Agha Safdar Saheb.

Young India, 15-12-1921

2. *WOMEN'S PART*

The women of Calcutta have obstructed the gentlemen of Calcutta by trying to sell khadi and a telegram in the newspapers has announced that they have been consequently arrested[2]. The company includes the devoted partner of the President elect[3], his widowed sister and his niece.[4] I had hoped that in the initial stages, at any rate, women would be spared the honour of going to jail. They were not to become aggressive civil resisters. But the Bengal Government, in their impartial zeal to make no distinction even of sex, have conferred the honour upon three women of

[1] As President, Punjab Provincial Congress Committee
[2] On December 7, 1921, on a charge of obstructing the highway
[3] C. R. Das
[4] They were released subsequently.

Calcutta. I hope that the whole country will welcome this innovation. The women of India should have as much share in winning swaraj as men. Probably in this peaceful struggle woman can outdistance man by many a mile. We know that she is any day superior to man in her religious devotion. Silent and dignified suffering is the badge of her sex. And now that the Government of Bengal have dragged the woman into the line of fire, I hope that the women all over India will take up the challenge and organize themselves. In any case, they were bound, when a sufficient number of men had been removed, for the honour of their sex to step into their places. But now let it be side by side with men in sharing the hardships of jail life. God will protect their honour. When, as if to mock man, her natural protectors became helpless to prevent Draupadi[1] from being denuded of her last piece of cloth, the power of her own virtue preserved her honour. And so will it be to the end of time. Even the weakest physically have been given the ability to protect their own honour. Let it be man's privilege to protect woman, but let no woman of India feel helpless in the absence of man or in the event of his failing to perform the sacred duty of protecting her. One who knows how to die need never fear any harm to her or his honour.

I would suggest to the women of India quietly but without loss of time to collect names of those who are ready to enter the line of fire. Let them send their offer to the women of Bengal and let the latter feel that their sisters elsewhere are ready to follow their noble example. It is likely that there will not be many forthcoming to brave the risks of a jail life and all it must mean to women. The nation will have no cause to be ashamed if only a few offer themselves for sacrifice in the first instance.

Men's duty is clear. We must not lose our heads. Excitement will not protect our women or our country. We have asked Government neither to spare women nor children. It certainly did not in the Punjab during those martial law days. I consider it decidedly more civilized that the officials in Calcutta should under a legal pretence arrest our sisters in Calcutta for what they consider is a crime than that a Bosworth Smith in the Punjab should spit upon, swear at and otherwise humiliate the women of Manianwala.[2] We did not offer our women to be insulted thus wise. But we do offer our women for imprisonment if they will arrest them in the prosecution of public service. We must not expect the Government

[1] Heroine of the *Mahabharata*; admired for her dauntless spirit

[2] *Vide* Vol. XVII, pp.114-292.

to look on with indifference whilst the women are spreading the gospel of swadeshi and undermining the very basis of its existence—its traffic in foreign cloth and the consequent ability to exploit India's resources. If, therefore, we men allow our sisters to take part in the swadeshi agitation, we must concede the right of the Government to imprison them equally with men.

We must, therefore, control our anger. It will be cowardly to challenge a duel and then swear at the adversary for taking up the challenge. Men must fill the jails. Men must prove to the Government that the awakening is not confined to a few men but it has permeated the masses, that the spirit of non-violence possesses not merely a select number but that it possesses the best part of India. We must show by our conduct that the sudden eruption was an exception and not a symptom of a general disease. And now, when the cause for irritation is almost the greatest, is the time for showing the greatest forbearance and self-restraint. I modify the adjective by using an adverb before it. For, I do not think that the greatest irritation has yet been offered. I can conceive occasions which may cause irritation to the straining point. If we are to gain freedom and vindicate the honour of the Khilafat and the Punjab, we must pay a much higher price and not lose equanimity in the midst of the greatest possible irritation. Let us prepare for the worst and give credit to the Government for decency by expecting the least. Let us acknowledge frankly that in most cases they are obeying the laws of war by being courteous. If they handcuffed Pir Badshah Mian and Dr. Suresh Banerjee, they have not done so in the case of the Ali Brothers, Lala Lajpat Rai, Maulana Mohiuddin or Pandit Motilal Nehru. Nor would I quarrel with handcuffing if they imposed it on all. It is a jail regulation to handcuff a prisoner. I should certainly have loved to travel to Allahabad to see Pandit Motilal Nehru and his son being handcuffed together and made to walk to their destination. I would have loved to watch the radiant smiles on their faces in the consciousness of their handcuffs hastening the advent of swaraj. But the Government did not provide any such treat. What I do not expect, what I do not want for the sake of man's dignity, is a repetition of the petty and degrading insults of the Punjab or the unthinkable inhumanities of the Moplah death wagon. But non-co-operators have stipulated for no such immunity. We have conceived the possibility of the worst happening, and under a full sense of our responsibility pledged ourselves to remain non-violent. Swaraj is within our grasp; let it not step away from us by self-forgetfulness.

With leaders in jails, there should be hartals wherever the Prince goes. No meetings are necessary to organize them. The people have sufficient training for spontaneous action. Let the Government realize that it was not force but willing response that brought about hartals. There must be nowhere any unauthorized or ill-conceived civil disobedience. Every forward step must be taken with the greatest deliberation and calmness. The people can discuss things in their own homes. The merchants meet a thousand times for business. They may easily discuss and decide matters arising out of the situation as it develops hourly. But whilst I would like hartals to follow the Prince, I would take no risk of violence and would not countenance the slightest exercise of force or threat of it. Absence of prescribed hartal would somewhat discredit us, but an outbreak of violence would retard our progress and may even indefinitely postpone swaraj.

I hope, too, that every vacancy in the ranks of delegates will be filled and that there will be a full attendance at the Congress of members who will have made up their minds as to what they want and how they will have it.

Whilst this was being printed, advice was received that the three ladies were discharged after a few hours' detention. Nevertheless, I allow the writing to go to the public as the argument holds good in the main. I observe, too, that the ladies have been discharged with a caution.

Young India, 15-12-1921

3. FROM LALA LAJPAT RAI

DEAR MAHATMAJI,

I am writing this to you so early as, in all probability, I will be arrested by this evening. I am sorry I may look to have disregarded your wishes but the circumstances are such as leave me no alternative. We have called a meeting of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee for today at 2 p.m. The Deputy Commissioner calls it a public meeting. . . . Most probably he will prohibit the meeting. He has also served us with a notice calling *ward meetings* of ward Congress Committees also public. This means an entire stoppage of work. His orders are illegal. . . .

Under the circumstances, it is impossible for me to keep away from the meeting. It will be sheer cowardice. Please pardon me if my action does not meet with your approval . . . . Rest assured I will not bring disgrace on your movement. Pardon me if I have ever seemed to be

critical and distrustful. In all my actions only one motive has been uppermost in my thoughts, viz., that of loyalty to my country and my people. If I have erred, I have erred in good faith. Even in my criticisms of my Moderate friends I have no other motive. . . .

The Sikh non-co-operators have set a noble example. . . . The Sikh community has so far kept its temper admirably well in spite of the provocations given. Most of the arrests have been made in the presence of hundreds and thousands. . . . Our Sikh friends deserve all the praise one can bestow on brave, noble, sufferers in the cause of truth.

We have selected Agha Safdar as my successor in the office of the President, Provincial Congress Committee and I have in consultation drawn up a programme for immediate action. . . .

Mr. Stokes was this morning arrested.[1]

Your devoted comrade,
LAJPAT RAI

December 3, 1921
7 a.m.

The reader will appreciate my sharing the foregoing[2] with him. It is remarkable how every leader has made complete arrangements in anticipation of going to jail. Of course Lalaji could not have acted otherwise than he did. I was anxious for him, if it was naturally possible, not to seek arrest till after the Congress[3]. But in the circumstances that faced him, he could not avoid attending the meeting without hurting the cause. A general ceases to be a general when he shirks battle that is offered to him. In every action of Lalaji I see nothing but thoughtfulness and calm courage. I fully endorse Lalaji's tribute to the Sikhs. Their resolute behaviour, their religious fervour, their calmness and their suffering command my highest admiration. One sees in everything that is happening in the country the throes of a new birth. May God grant that no hasty action, no outbreak of violence impedes our unmistakable progress towards our destined goal!

Young India, 15-12-1921

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXI, p. 532.
[2] Only excerpts reproduced here
[3] Which was to be held at Ahmedabad towards the end of December 1921.

4. CHRISTIANS AND SWARAJ

THE EDITOR, *Young India*

SIR,

At this time when there is so much questioning about the attitude of Indian Christians towards swaraj, I, as a representative of a large class of thinking Christians, should like to draw the attention of your readers to certain important facts with which very few of our Hindu and Moslem compatriots are acquainted.

Let me, in the first place, point out clearly that the so-called Indian Christians are a community built up very largely by peoples in the West. . . . The two agencies which have completed the work of denationalizing the Christian church in India have been : (i) the Western missionary societies, (ii) our own Hindu and Moslem brethren. . . . Our Hindu and Moslem relations . . . ostracized and boycotted us. . . . on our adopting a different religion. . . .

Through the influence of missionaries, Indian Christians adopted English ways of dress and living which instilled in them a sense of their own importance and completely destroyed the last germ of patriotism and national zeal. . . . God's name be praised that in spite of the missionaries' efforts to keep us down, a real awakening has, after all, come upon our community, and with growing means of education and prosperity a real sense of devotion to our motherland is also fast developing. . . . You will find that some Indian Christians are even worse Anglo-Indians in their views than many Europeans and Anglo-Indians themselves. But if you are true Indians, be patient with such . . . befriend them and prove to them that all Indians, whether they be Hindus, Muslims, Parsis or Christians, are the sons and daughters of the self-same mother and so true brothers and true sisters. . . . Assure your Christian brethren of your real love for them and you will find that the Christian Indian, when he is once inspired with the love of his country, will lay down his very life in her service and shed his very blood in her noble fight for freedom.

I am, etc.,

A CHRISTIAN SON OF MOTHER INDIA

I publish this letter[1] with the omission of two passages of personal reference because of the appeal made to Hindus and Mussulmans. I do not like the unqualified reference to the

[1] Only excerpts reproduced here

European missionaries. Though much of what the writer says regarding them is true, there are many European missionaries who are not anti-Indian or anti-Hindu or anti-Muslim. The task before nationalists is clear. They have to win over by their genuine love all minorities including Englishmen. Indian nationalism, if it is to remain non-violent, cannot be exclusive.

Young India, 15-12-1921

5. OF SPINNING-WHEELS

THE EDITOR, *Young India*

SIR,

The District Congress Committee has no expert spinner appointed whom they can and should consult about the charkha to be selected for introducing to the public. . . .

Most of the workers have yet to realize that a thin spindle with revolutions over 150 to one of the wheel is necessary for turning out good weavable yarn.

The charkha recommended in *Young India* is taken as a pattern in some places, but the revolutions of the spindle (which is generally at least half an inch in diameter) being lower than 40 increase the time as it is necessary after drawing out a length of yarn to turn the wheel so many times to ensure the proper twist.

The result of all this is seen in the number of charkhas lying idle or producing yarn which is refused by weavers being undertwisted and uneven. . . . if the Committee is going to spend the major portion of the Tilak Swaraj Fund on this item, it must lay down a clear stipulation when giving the money, that every District body thus supplied with money must have an expert spinner . . .

Yours etc.,
(DR.) A. K. NULKAR
VICE-PRESIDENT, EAST KHANDESH DISTRICT CONGRESS COMMITTEE

November 21 1921

I gladly publish the foregoing[1] to stimulate interest in the matter of improvement in the existing spinning-wheels and to show what keen interest educated men are taking in hand-spinning. I commend Dr. Nulkar's example for emulation.

Young India, 15-12-1921

[1] Only excerpts reproduced here

6. *A PUZZLE AND ITS SOLUTION*[1]

Lord Reading is puzzled and perplexed. Speaking in reply to the addresses from the British Indian Association and the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce at Calcutta, His Excellency said:

> I confess that when I contemplate the activities of a section of the community, I find myself still, notwithstanding persistent study ever since I have been in India, puzzled and perplexed. I ask myself what purpose is served by flagrant breaches of the law for the purpose of challenging the Government and in order to compel arrest.

The answer was partly given by Pandit Motilal Nehru when he said on being arrested[2] that he was being taken to the house of freedom. We seek arrest because the so-called freedom is slavery. We are challenging the might of this Government because we consider its activity to be wholly evil. We want to overthrow the Government. We want to compel its submission to the people's will. We desire to show that the Government exists to serve the people, not the people the Government. Free life under the Government has become intolerable, for the price exacted for the retention of freedom is unconscionably great. Whether we are one or many, we must refuse to purchase freedom at the cost of our self-respect or our cherished convictions. I have known even little children become unbending when an attempt has been made to cross their declared purpose, be it ever so flimsy in the estimation of their parents.

Lord Reading must clearly understand that the non-co-operators are at war with the Government. They have declared rebellion against it inasmuch as it has committed a breach of faith with the Mussulmans, it has humiliated the Punjab and it insists upon imposing its will upon the people and refuses to repair the breach and repent of the wrong done in the Punjab.

There were two ways open to the people, the way of armed rebellion and the way of peaceful revolt. Non-co-operators have

[1] This is one of the articles for which Gandhiji was tried and sentenced in March 1922.

[2] On December 6, 1921

chosen, some out of weakness, some out of strength, the way of peace, i.e., voluntary suffering.

If the people are behind the sufferers, the Government must yield or be overthrown. If the people are not with them they have at least the satisfaction of not having sold their freedom. In an armed conflict, the more violent is generally the victor. The way of peace and suffering is the quickest method of cultivating public opinion, and, therefore, when victory is attained, it is for what the world regards as Truth. Bred in the atmosphere of law-courts, Lord Reading finds it difficult to appreciate the peaceful resistance to authority. His Excellency will learn by the time the conflict is over that there is a higher court than courts of justice, and that is the court of conscience. It supersedes all other courts.

Lord Reading is welcome to treat all the sufferers as lunatics, who do not know their own interest. He is entitled, therefore, to put them out of harm's way. It is an arrangement that entirely suits the lunatics and it is an ideal situation if it also suits the Government. He will have cause to complain if, having courted imprisonment, non-co-operators fret and fume or "whine for favours" as Lalaji puts it. The strength of a non-co-operator lies in his going to jail uncomplainingly. He loses his case if, having courted imprisonment, he begins to grumble, immediately his courtship is rewarded.

The threats used by His Excellency are unbecoming. This is a fight to the finish. It is a conflict between the reign of violence and of public opinion. Those who are fighting for the latter are determined to submit to any violence rather than surrender their opinion.

Young India, 15-12-1921

7. MUNICIPALITIES IN TROUBLE

The municipalities of Ahmedabad, Nadiad and Surat are again in trouble about their education departments.[1] The Government intends to declare the municipalities unfit to run the departments and then take over their administration. It has, therefore, issued notices to the three municipalities to the effect that it will take over the control of their education departments unless they

[1] These municipalities had decided to impart national education in their schools and to refuse Government grants; for Nadiad Municipality's decision, *vide* Vol. XIX, pp. 340-1.

carry out its directions before 5 p.m. on the 17th instant. Where the municipality has the support of a clear majority for its decision, it will be difficult for the Government to take over the administration of a department.

In the present circumstances, a non-co-operator can continue as member of a municipality for one reason only, namely, to increase the strength of the people by every legitimate means and to reduce the control of the Government. Where there is a majority of those who co-operate with the Government and it is not possible to realize this aim, a non-co-operator should certainly not continue as a member merely for creating disorder or obstructing the proceedings. He should realize that such tactics do not increase the strength of the people but are only a waste of time. Experience shows us that a person who commands a majority cannot be clamoured out of his decision. When his principles are involved, he does not hesitate to make the fullest use of his majority. The rule of majority yields excellent results in matters in which no fundamentals are involved. Where, however, fundamentals are involved, the convention of bowing to a majority leads to society's decline. It is, therefore, desirable that we continue members of only those municipalities in which we command a majority.

Let us examine the present situation from this angle. One way to prevent the control of education from passing into the hands of the Government, as also to cut short all argument with it, is to entrust the administration of education to the national institution in each town and to subsidize it with grants. A municipality has the power to make such grants. If this can be done, the Government's taking over the education department will be of little significance. It will not get control over the present students, who will remain self-reliant. The Government administrator may start new schools if he so chooses. No citizen will prevent him. From where, however, will the Government get the children to attend its new schools? We believe that all children who want schooling are already attending the existing municipal schools. Again, the Government will face difficulties in financing its new department. The municipalities will never sanction the expenditure of their own free will. The Government will have, therefore, to distrain upon the municipalities every time they need the money. This, again, will lead to ultimate discomfiture of the Government.

The second way, if the Government appoints its administrator, is that the municipality should advise the school-teachers

not to carry out the administrator's orders and let him take whatever steps he likes. This too will wear out the Government.

The third way is to work among the voters in case the Government succeeds in taking over the administration of the existing schools. That is, the people should be so educated that they will see to it that no child attends Government schools, and all people will send children to the new [national] schools instead.

All these three ways cannot be adopted simultaneously; we should select one of them and concentrate upon it. It is the duty of the members to educate the voters so thoroughly that they would be ready for any step which might be necessary.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 15-12-1921

8. *MY NOTES*

To Parents

Parents who send their children to schools or Ashrams have certain obligations to fulfil. Their failure to fulfil them harms the children, the institutions as also the parents themselves. Parents should acquaint themselves with the rules of the institution to which they want their children to be admitted. They should know the habits and needs of their children and adhere to the decision once it is taken. During the time when the children are supposed to stay in the Ashram, they should not be called away to serve their parents' convenience or in order that they might be of service to the latter; how, then, can they be called away to attend marriages? Why should children be invited on such occasions? Just as parents do not involve children in their other social affairs, so also they should not involve them in the business of marriages. During student-life, children's attention should not be distracted from their studies; moreover, during this period, children should remain *brahmacharis*[1]. If they are compelled to attend marriages and such other functions, they may find it difficult to do this. It is, therefore, necessary that we deliberately keep children away from such celebrations. Besides, at a time like this, when the very idea of marriage seems improper, it is an outrage on a child who, left to itself, would keep away from a marriage, to tempt it with the thought of attending one. In these days when we have

[1] Celibates

12. *TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD*[1]

[On or after *December 15, 1921*]

RAJENDRA PRASAD[2]
CHAPRA

DO ENLIST LEAVING INSTRUCTION [TO] YOUNG, RELIABLE TEN ENSURING NON-VIOLENCE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7726

13. *TELEGRAM TO SRI PRAKASA*[3]

[On or after *December 15, 1921*]

SRI PRAKASA[4]
SEVASHRAM
BANARAS

HEARTY CONGRATULATIONS. WAS TOTALLY UNPREPARED FOR SUCH CONSUMMATION.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7729

[1] Sent in reply to Rajendra Prasad's telegram received on December 15, 1921, which read: "Government proclaimed Volunteer Corps unlawful. Shafi, Janakdhari, and fifty volunteers arrested for disregarding proclamation. We propose that Haque, Brijkishore, Deepanandan, myself should enlist. Wire instructions Chapra."

[2] 1884-1963; statesman and scholar; Chairman, Constituent Assembly of India, 1946-9; first President of India

[3] This was sent in reply to Sri Prakasa's telegram of December 15, 1921, which read: "Father arrested under Section 107 Criminal Code, all well."

[4] b. 1890; son of Bhagwandas, the eminent scholar of Banaras; Congress leader and freedom fighter; India's High Commissioner to Pakistan; later, Governor of Bombay

14. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

[On or after *December 15, 1921*][1]

GOOD. HOPE YOU WILL GET MAXIMUM PENALTY.

GANDHI

Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi, p. 172

15. DRAFT TELEGRAM TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA[2]

[*December 16, 1921*][3]

WISH YOU WOULD RECOGNIZE THIS IS FIGHT TO THE FINISH. NON-CO-OPERATORS ARE PURELY ON THE DEFENSIVE. IF PROVOKING ORDERS DISBANDMENT AND STOPPING PUBLIC MEETINGS WITHDRAWN PRESENT CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE STOPS AUTOMATICALLY. BOYCOTT OF WELCOME MUST PERSIST SO LONG AS GOVERNMENT IRRESPONSIVE PUBLIC OPINION. CONFERENCE WILL BE ABORTIVE UNLESS GOVERNMENT TRULY PENITENT AND DESIROUS REMOVE RANKLING GRIEVANCES AND YIELD FORCE OF PUBLIC OPINION. WILL HOWEVER DISCUSS SITUATION JAMNADAS[4] KUNZRU[5]

GANDHI

Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi, Vol. II, p. 132

[1] The addressee was served with a notice under the Criminal Law Amendment Act at 12 noon on December 15, 1921, and was asked to take his trial on the same day at 4 p.m. The trial was, however, adjourned and, according to the source, Gandhiji sent this telegram on receiving news regarding the case.

[2] 1861-1946; founder of the Benares Hindu University; twice President of the Indian National Congress

[3] This telegram was dictated to Krishnadas, Gandhiji's secretary, immediately on receipt of Malaviya's telegram of December 16, 1921, which read: "Am arranging deputation of about seven to Viceroy on 21st to press upon him necessity of Round Table Conference. Hence going to Calcutta. Jamnadas and Kunzru reach Sabarmati tomorrow to explain situation. Desire to have your authority to say that if conference is accepted and Government stays hands and releases leaders, you will withdraw opposition to Prince's welcome and suspend civil disobedience till termination conference. Calcutta address till 21 No. 31 Burtillo Street." According to Krishnadas, this draft was not sent. For the reply which was sent after Jamnadas and Kunzru met Gandhiji, *vide* "Telegram to Madan Mohan Malaviya", 19-12-1921.

[4] Jamnadas Dwarkadas, a leading member of the Home Rule League

[5] Hriday Nath Kunzru (b. 1887); President of the Servants of India Society; Liberal politician and parliamentarian

16. CIRCULAR LETTER[1]

SABARMATI,
December 16, 1921

DEAR FRIEND,

I do not know who will be able to attend the A.I.C.C. meeting. I, therefore, send you draft resolution which I would like to have passed. Will you please send me your criticism if you cannot attend? And of course you will not come even if you are free if your presence is required in your province for keeping the peace. The draft is not for publication at all.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 9545

17. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM,
Friday [December 16, 1921][2]

CHI. DEVDAS,

I got your letter. The description of the prisoners is given in beautiful language but a shabby hand, so that the latter cancels the beauty of the former.

I am awaiting a wire to tell me that you have gone to jail and Mahadev has been arrested.

Please let me know by wire whether or not Mrs. Nehru and others are coming. Today I do not propose to write a separate letter to Mahadev.

You both ought to keep good health. With Pyarelal there, you should no longer feel short of help.

[1] This was presumably sent to Congress workers in the various provinces.

[2] Jamnadas Dwarkadas and Hriday Nath Kunzru mentioned in the postscript arrived at the Ashram on December 17, 1921.

Anna[1], Gomtibehn[2] and Sarkar's[3] sister-in-law have arrived in the Ashram. Vasumatibehn is also here.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Andrews[4], Jamnadas and Kunzru are coming tomorrow.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 7677

18. TELEGRAM TO JIARAM SAXENA[5]

[On or after *December 16, 1921*]

JIARAM[6]
CONGRESS COMMITTEE
ALLAHABAD

WORKING COMMITTEE TWENTY-THIRD.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 7723

19. TELEGRAM TO MAULANA ABDUL BARI[7]

[On or after *December 16, 1921*][8]

WE HAVE EVERY REASON PRAISE GOD FOR HIS MERCY. HOPE YOU ARE WELL.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 7724

[1] Harihar Sharma; earlier, member of Ganganath Bharatiya Vidyalaya, Baroda; active worker of Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha

[2] Wife of Kishorelal Mashruwala

[3] Patwardhan Yadawadkar, honorary worker on the editorial staff of *Young India*. He died during the Nagpur Congress in December 1920; *vide* Vol. XIX, p. 211.

[4] C. F. Andrews (1871-1940); British missionary; co-worker of Tagore and Gandhiji; honoured as "Deenabandhu" or "brother of the poor"

[5] Sent in reply to Jiaram's telegram of December 16, 1921, which read : "Letter Received. Kindly wire date Working Committee."

[6] Secretary, U. P. Provincial Congress Committee

[7] 1838-1926; Nationalist Muslim divine of Lucknow who took active part in the Khilafat movement

[8] This telegram was sent in reply to Maulana Abdul Bari's telegram of December 16, 1921, which read: "Have come back from Hyderabad today. I was

20. TELEGRAM TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR[1]

[On or after *December 16, 1921*]

ACHARYA[2]
SALEM

YOU MUST JUDGE SITUATION THERE AND DECIDE ABOUT COMING.[3]

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7728

21. TELEGRAM TO SHYAM SUNDER CHAKRAVARTY[4]

[On or after *December 16, 1921*]

VACANCIES SHOULD BE FILLED UP.

From a photostat: S.N. 7731

very much pleased by the victorious spirit of Maulvi Salamatullah and my other dearest Hindu-Muslim friends. I congratulate you on their arrest. We are proud of the citizens of Lucknow and Allahabad for their patience, tolerance, orderly manner, unity of action, and obedience to Congress orders. The correct report about hartal both in Lucknow and Allahabad is that it was complete, and perfect non-violence prevailed. Have just seen Pandit Motilalji and Maulana Salamatullah with their comrades in jail. All are cheerful and happy. Have just heard about your son's arrest. Hearty congratulations. Hopeful sign."

1. Sent in reply to Vijayaraghavachariar's telegram of December 15, received by Gandhiji on the 16th, which read: "Kindly wire whether my arrival 24th sufficient if you think my attendance absolutely necessary earlier most inconvenient."

2 C. Vijayaraghavachariar (1852-1943); leading lawyer and active Congressman; presided over the Nagpur Congress session, 1920

3 Presumably to attend the Congress session at Ahmedabad

4 Editor of the *Servant*, Calcutta; succeeded C.R. Das as President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee

This telegram was sent in reply to Chakravarty's telegram of December 16, 1921, which read: "Kindly wire opinion if places of imprisoned All-India Congress Committee members may be treated vacancies and filled up."

22. *THINGS THAT SINK*

December 17, 1921

To imprison those who, whether high or low, break the commandments, to treat them as common felons, to deprive them of their prison privileges, one can understand. I would not call that foul play. If you incur the wrath of one who is over you or who has you under his power for the time being, to be punished by him for your disobedience is what you expect. But if he humiliates you, if he makes your children do things you and they do not like and which you are not required in law to do, if he treats you like dirt, it becomes unbearable. One learns that in Cocanada a Magistrate had the swaraj and the Khilafat flags pulled down, that he issued orders prohibiting the use of such flags for one week, that the children of a school were compelled to salute the Union Jack, that a distinguished Professor in Calcutta, going out in his academic costume and on the strength thereof going up to an officer to stop a wanton hunt of inoffensive men, was brutally assaulted for his innocent inquiry as to the cause of the hunt, that a party of brave cultured young men were kicked about by those who were their warders for the time being. These are things that sink. These humiliations show that there is little change in the manners of our "masters". The O'Dwyerian spirit has not died out. Of what use is it that Lord Ronaldshay sends for the injured Professor, soothes him and assures him that the thing will not happen again? What will not happen again? The Professor will not be assaulted? Of course he will not be during the present crisis. The Professor himself will not again presume upon his academic costume and challenge an officer very soon. But has the officer any respect for the Professor? The Professor did not seek relief for himself. He interceded for injured humanity. Will Indian humanity be protected and respected in future because of His Lordship's assurance? It is the habitual training given to the soldier that matters. He is converted into a vicious animal to be let loose on harmless people on given occasions. The Dases and the Azads have gone to jail to prevent a repetition of such unmanly and brutal exhibitions. They have welcomed imprisonment in order that even the worst criminal may be protected against wanton injury, that even he may not have his self-respect wounded. They have not gone to jail for any mechanical transference of power. The organic change they want, that Lala Lajpat Rai has been

pining for for years, that has become the breath of life for the ease-loving Motilal Nehru and has made of him practically a fakir, is not to be brought about by Lord Ronaldshay, however well-intentioned he may be in his apologies, nor by Lord Reading's smooth phrases and his personal care that officers and men might not overstep the limits of law. The organic change will be and can only be brought about by the suffering that has come to the people and for which, thank God, they find themselves prepared. A cautious friend in order to restrain my optimism tells me, that the suffering has only just begun, that for the end in view we must pay a much higher price still. He really expects that we shall have to invite a repetition of Jallianwalas and that instead of approaching the triangles of the crawling lane fame tremblingly and reluctantly, we shall have now to walk to them cheerfully and with a steady step and suffer lashes for refusing to crawl.[1] I assure the friend that my optimism has room for all these things and much worse that he can imagine. But I promise, too, that if India remains calm and unperturbed and does not retaliate even mentally—a very difficult process I admit and yet not so difficult in India's present exalted mood—our very preparedness and consequent absence of reaction will exhaust the brute spirit for want of nutrition, and Lord Reading, instead of talking big things to us, will himself adopt the human language of penitence and see ample occasion in the Indian atmosphere for a new diplomacy. Whereas if we forget ourselves and our pledge, we must be ready for a thousand Jallianwalas and India being turned into a vast shambles. The President elect has prepared us for such a consummation. He is sure that we have shed the fear of the prison. He is almost certain probably from the experience of his brave son and his company that we will be prepared to undergo the ordeal of assaults. But he bids us give up the fear of death itself. If that time is in store for us, I hope that there will be non-violent non-co-operators enough in India, of whom it will be written:

> "They suffered bullets without anger and with prayer on their lips even for the ignorant murderer."

Well, if the reports are to be credited, two Assamese volunteers have been whipped, the volunteers of Lahore have meekly borne the wanton assaults committed on them. This fight is not a joke. We have disciplined ourselves for the past twelve months

[1] For the incidents mentioned, *vide* Vol. XVII, pp. 114-292.

and more, and we must now go through it to the end. There is no turning back.

Young India, 22-12-1921

23. *WHAT WILL GUJARAT DO?*

Five hundred fighters in Bengal have been arrested within the last ten days. Between two and three hundred persons must have been arrested in U.P., and about a hundred have been arrested in the Punjab. If the number of arrests is not larger in these two provinces, it is not the fault of the non-co-operators there. From the letters which I have received, I find that in all these three provinces the Governments get as many fighters as would please them to arrest. If the number of arrests so far appears small, it is due to the Government's own laxity. Hundreds are ready in every province to make the pilgrimage to jails.

At this hour, Gujarat is calm and quiet, waiting in patience. This composure, patience and silence appeal to me much, because I am sure that hundreds of Gujaratis are just waiting to court arrest. Gujarat had hoped to be the first to fill prisons; but that honour has gone to Bengal. If, however, we Gujaratis are in fact ready for imprisonment, we need not envy Bengal. I trust that when our hour arrives we shall quickly catch up with Bengal.

That hour is drawing near.

If Bardoli or Anand does not get ready, we cannot launch mass civil disobedience; but there is no restriction whatsoever on individual civil disobedience. Mass civil disobedience may bring the desired result early, while individual civil disobedience may mean some delay. It is my earnest hope that Bardoli at least will get ready and we shall be prepared both for mass and, if necessary, for individual civil disobedience.

Let Bardoli, Anand and Nadiad prepare themselves for mass civil disobedience; in other parts, individuals should keep themselves ready for the call. In every village, those who are willing to court imprisonment should get their names enrolled in the local village committee register. If there is no village committee or if no one is ready to take up the work of enrolling names, volunteers should register their names with the taluka committee. Village committees should send the names to the taluka committee. These names should be ultimately registered with the Gujarat Provincial Committee.

Those who do not believe that freedom can be won only by peaceful means, who, being Hindus, are not ready to give up the practice of untouchability, who are not good at spinning, who have not completely forsworn foreign cloth, who do not exclusively wear hand-spun and hand-woven khadi, and who do not recognize the need for unity of the Hindus, the Muslims, the Sikhs, the Parsis, the Christians and the Jews, should not even think of courting arrest and should decidedly abandon the idea of getting their names enrolled as volunteers.

Those who have not purified themselves or have not given up liquor, will be rendering a service to the country by keeping away from this holy war, for by doing so they will show that they understand their limitations.

Those who get enrolled as volunteers will have to provide their own maintenance. They should not expect the Congress committee concerned to provide it. A person who desires to serve the country but cannot find a single friend to finance his needs at such a juncture cannot, in my view, be fit for national service. A volunteer's expenses cannot be heavy and surely they cannot be a burden on anyone.

What I have said about men applies to women too. Although it is not necessary to bring them out to court arrest, such of them as have tasted the nectar of patriotism should, however, keep themselves ready.

A friend from Kathiawar inquires what people in Indian States can do. Subjects of these States should not be enrolled within the States themselves. Such of them, however, as wish to court imprisonment may register their names with the Provincial Committee and even those who are not ready to register their names may cultivate the qualities I have mentioned as necessary for volunteers.

Our calm and patience will justify themselves and be appreciated as evidence of true courage only if we thus prepare ourselves and keep ready in our thousands to fill the jails. If, when the time comes, we are unable to display such strength and make the required sacrifices, we shall be looked down upon as spineless cowards. I have, however, no misgivings about Gujarat's courage.

All that I desire is that wisdom should accompany courage. The wisdom we require is about the need for swadeshi and for eradicating untouchability. Every person should enlighten his or her family and every married man should educate his wife about these matters. Our women have not yet developed sufficient

love for khadi. Their fascination for multicoloured foreign cloth with insufferable designs has not yet disappeared. They have not yet rid themselves of the sin of untouchability. No effort has been made to explain these things to them with patience and love. It is easy for everyone to attempt this in his own family. One may understand that success will not follow in all cases, but our efforts must begin at home, and just as we share our fresh acquisitions with our family members first, likewise they should be the first whom we should invite to join us when we undertake a new kind of sacrifice or try to bring about some reform.

Gujarat may remain busy this month with preparations for the Congress which is to meet in the last week of December but, in January, it will have no choice but to get ready for the test. Hence I wish to alert Gujaratis right now. The Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee's primary task in the new year according to the Christian calendar will be to prepare Gujarat for self-sacrifice.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 18-12-1921

24. CIVILITY

Civility, good manners and humility—these virtues are at such discount these days that they seem to have no place at all in the building of our character. If a person observes mere physical celibacy, he acts like a Bajirao[1], frowns upon and runs down everyone else and we tolerate his rudeness as we do kicks from a milch-cow. Similarly, if a person is truthful in speech, we give him a licence to be sharp-tongued and a khadi-wearer can come down in fury upon those who do not wear khadi. In like manner, a person who offers civil disobedience sometimes acts as if he had a licence to be insolent to others. These corporals of the army of incivility are not a true *brahmachari* or a truth-lover or a khadi-lover or a civil resister, as the case may be. All the four of them are as far away from their vows as the north is from the south. It may be safely asserted that a person deficient in good manners lacks discrimination and that, lacking discrimination, he lacks every-

[1] One of the Peshwas of the Maratha Empire

thing else. Vishvamitra's[1] *tapascharya*[2] was considered incomplete till he had learnt civility.

Civility and humility are expressions of the spirit of non-violence while incivility and insolence indicate the spirit of violence. A non-co-operator, therefore, ought never to be uncivil. However, the most persistent charge levelled against non-co-operators is that they lack manners and are insolent, and the charge has much substance in it. We are apt to believe that in becoming non-co-operators we have done something very great, as if a person who had done no more than pay his debt had thereby become entitled to get an address.

This lack of manners delays our victory in the struggle we are carrying on, for, as politeness disarms anger and hatred, incivility increases hostility. Had non-co-operators remained courteous towards those who co-operated with the Government, had they, instead of abusing the latter, shown respect towards them, the existing bitterness between the two would not be there and the unhappy events[3] which were witnessed in Bombay would not have taken place. A student who has left his Government school should not harass or abuse another who may not have left his but should try, instead, to win him over with love. He should continue to render him the same service as he used to do before. A lawyer who has given up practice should not turn up his nose at another who may not have done so, but should maintain with him the same cordial relations as before. A person who has resigned from Government service should not run down another who may not have left it.

Had we, right from the beginning, approached our task in this spirit, it is possible that we would have reached our goal by now and the country would have advanced much further than it has done. The Moderate party would not then have kept away from us.

I trust no one will understand politeness to mean flattery. Nor does it mean hiding our regard for our dharma. To be polite means to show respect towards others while clinging to our own dharma. Because I put a vermilion mark on my forehead, I may not sneer at another who does not do so. If I face the east when praying, I should not feel contempt for my Muslim brother who

[1] A sage in the *Ramayana*. He had renounced his kingdom to practise austerities and be the equal of sage Vasistha, but did not succeed till the egotistic motive had left him.

[2] Self-suffering as moral discipline

[3] The riots on November 17, 1921

says his *namaz* with his face towards the west. Ability to pronounce Sanskrit words correctly does not entitle me to speak contemptuously of the sounds in the Arabic language. A lover of khadi, while wearing a khadi cap himself, can still be tolerant of a person who wears a sola hat and love him. If a man all clad in khadi starts swearing at a person wearing garments of foreign cloth, he will be acting as the most effective propagandist of such cloth. The incidents in Bombay have not made khadi more popular. On the contrary, it now stinks in the nostrils of some.

If we, khadi-lovers, wish to see the whole of India wearing khadi, we should patiently plead with people who used foreign cloth. However much we speak against such cloth, we should display nothing but love for those who use it. The plague is a dreadful disease but we, too, are likely to catch it if we turn away from any person who has got it. We may desire the disease to be rooted out but not the patient to be killed. If we look upon wearing foreign cloth as a kind of disease, we should attend on a person who suffers from it. May not a person who wears foreign cloth look upon us as the victims of a disease? By all means, let him do so. If, nonetheless, we continue to give our services to each other, sooner or later we shall discover which of us was in error. If we do not act in this way, we shall never discover the difference between what is dharma and what is *adharma*[1].

Just as it is necessary for us to be courteous to those who co-operate with the Government, so those of us who are imprisoned will also have to behave with civility in the prison. It is difficult to observe jail rules and yet maintain one's self-respect. Some of these rules are naturally humiliating. For instance, we have no choice but to let ourselves be confined in a cell. We must, thus, respect the rules which apply to all prisoners. At the same time, we should firmly oppose any measure which is intended merely to humiliate us. Once we have taught ourselves to behave with courtesy, we shall instinctively know how to act in a particular situation.

Where there is egotism, we shall find incivility and arrogance. Where it is absent, we shall find a sense of self-respect together with civility. The egotist thinks too much of his body. The man of self-respect recognizes the *atman*[2], is ever thinking about it and, in order to realize it, is always ready to sacrifice his body. He

[1] The opposite of dharma

[2] Self

who holds his self-respect dear acts towards everyone in a spirit of friendship, for he values others' self-respect as much as he values his own. He sees himself in all and everyone else in himself, puts himself in line with others. The egotist keeps aloof from others and, believing himself superior to the rest of the world, he takes upon himself to judge everyone and in the result enables the world to have the measure of his smallness.

Hence, the non-violent non-co-operator should regard civility as a distinct virtue and try to cultivate it. The importance attached to it provides the measure of an individual's or a nation's culture. A non-co-operator should realize very clearly that incivility is another name for brutishness and eschew it completely.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-12-1921

25. *MY NOTES*

All Honour to That Wife

Khwaja Saheb was at the head of those who manage the affairs of the National Muslim University. I count him among the most straightforward Muslims. He is as proud of his country as he is of his religion. He belongs to a noble family. As a barrister, he lived in great style. Today, he has embraced a fakir's life in the cause of his faith and the country. I have just received a telegram from his wife, Khurshed Begum, informing me that he has been arrested by the Government. She says : "You will be pleased to know that, my husband having been arrested by the Government, I shall run the university." I was very much pleased to receive this telegram, for, with instances such as the Khwaja Saheb's holy sacrifice on the one hand and the patience and courage of his Begum on the other, who can stop the coming of swaraj? Begum Khurshed will find no difficulty in carrying on her work, for the brave and straightforward students of the university will muster round her and it is possible that they will do for her what they did not do for Khwaja Saheb. Besides, she will certainly give them better training in spinning than what Khwaja Saheb could.

Victory will assuredly be ours when many Indian women are inspired by such courage. At this time of great awakening, I request women to cultivate good capacity for organized work. They, too, should start working together. And the simple way of doing so is for them to get engrossed in their own work, instead of

criticizing one another. One whose only aim is service has no time for criticizing others.

Parsi Sisters

I have received a letter—an extremely painful one—from a Parsi sister in Bombay. Her complaint is such that I would like to spend a life-time investigating its root cause, but it is not possible to undertake an inquiry on the basis of her letter alone. If that sister happens to read this, I request her to send me her name and address or to meet me. I shall certainly not print her name, but I shall make all possible inquiries and assist her as much as possible if she gives me all the facts. If men and women who are in distress write anonymous letters and do not give facts which can be verified, it is easy to see that nothing can be done to help them.

I should also like to request those Parsi sisters who know me that they should make all possible inquiries and inform me if they come across any cases of suffering.

However well ordered a society may be, there is bound to be an area of it in which, despite all measures, cruelties cannot be prevented. We do not even come to know of the crimes which are committed today in London, New York, Chicago and Paris, the cruel things which are secretly done in these cities. No one can investigate them either. Even the alert police of these places cannot detect them. I believe we cannot even imagine some of the crimes which are committed in these cities. It is the duty of each one of us, men and women, to assist as many persons in distress as we can, and, through our services, bring relief to the distressed and thus discharge our social debt. That country in which a large number of people regard others' sufferings as their own and find remedies for them enjoys swaraj.

The Habit of Blaming the Police

A slave, a coward, is usually afraid and, therefore, puts the blame always on others. Among the letters which I have received regarding the painful incidents which took place in Bombay, there are some in which all the blame has been put on the police.

If the police are as corrupt as they are said to be in these letters, for that too we are to blame. Is it we, or some others, who tolerate such crimes? The police also are our brothers. If we look upon all policemen as our enemies and if we do not feel responsible for every wicked person, how are we going to run the Government? How, under swaraj, shall we exercise control over

such a corrupt police force or wicked persons? In the swaraj of our conception, the British who will have stayed on will be people's servants and remain as our brothers. We shall not be able then to burden them with the responsibility of protecting the innocent. Who then will keep the wicked under control?

Even a moment's reflection will make it clear to us that we cannot win swaraj so long as we are unable to influence the police and those whom we describe as bad characters. The Government is able to rule by keeping them under check. We shall be able to run the Government by winning them over through love or by becoming even more cruel and wicked than they are. The third alternative is to rule by punishing them. We do not have the strength to do this even if we wish to do it. This means that either we should wait for 200 to 400 years till we have acquired such strength and then think of swaraj, or win them over today through love.

The very existence of this class is a sign of the prevalence of *adharma* and wickedness. We shall not win swaraj by adding to the sum total of this wickedness. We can enjoy peace in the country only by conquering *adharma* through dharma. We tolerate the British Government for this very reason, that it protects the weaker section of the people by keeping this class of wicked persons generally under check. But the reason I oppose it is that, while offering such protection, the price that it exacts from the public is so heavy that it has itself become a rule of the wicked. In other words, as the price of such protection we have to sacrifice our self-respect. If, in order to deliver ourselves from such tyranny, we seek the help of the bad characters, we shall be in a sorry plight indeed. The result will be the same if we estrange them either. We should, without flattering them, win them over with love and stop being afraid of them. In other words, we should make them see their dharma. If some among them see it, others will soon learn from their example. The same principle applies to the police. Why should we fear the police? Even if they come wearing white caps, why should they be able to deceive anyone? If we are good, the whole world is good. Why should we be such cowards that we may be deceived? Supposing a policeman, dressed in khadi, cruelly beats up someone. Why should we get excited in consequence? We should plead with him. If he does not listen, we should give up the effort and, if we have the necessary strength, lay down our lives while trying to stop him in his evil course. If we do this, we shall have given proof of our courage. The police will certainly improve when they see this

courage of ours. The police become brutalized by beating up cowards. If a policeman attacks a brave person he will certainly get frightened afterwards. I have received a letter from a friend in Lahore in which he says that when even strong young men do not resist the police, the latter lose courage. They cannot harden themselves to beat such persons. Of course they cannot. I have had personal experience of many such instances. This fearlessness cannot be taught, it can only be cultivated through one's own effort. My correspondents, therefore, should realize that it is certainly our task to gain control over the bad characters, but we would be throwing ourselves from the frying pan into the fire if we try to do so through flattery. Although they are our brothers, they are like persons afflicted with a disease and we should treat them but should not place ourselves under their treatment. The police will become our friends the day we cease to fear them. Shedding fear of the police does not mean beating or abusing them, it means letting ourselves be beaten and abused by them, as the brave son of Chitta Ranjan Das did. He could have beaten the police in return. His friends were all strong young men. But they let themselves be beaten. To suffer being abused is one way; it is the way of non-co-operation. But to return two words of abuse for one is co-operation because then we shall be the guilty party. To let ourselves be overborne by abuse is to be enslaved by it. To suffer abuse does not mean doing the will of the person who abuses. It means the contrary. We should not even chant the name of Vishnu[1] if anyone tries to force us with abuse to do so. If the person who abuses us asks us to crawl on our stomach, we should walk holding ourselves erect. If he asks us to sit down, we should stand up and face his bullets. If we act in this way, he will be totally defeated, because his aim of bending us will not be fulfilled. Ravana carried away Sita on his shoulder but Sita did not do his bidding. Though he had thus the privilege of carrying her, he failed to be sanctified by physical contact with this Mother Divine but she, a helpless woman, became the Goddess Mother of the world. One should, therefore, let oneself be abused and beaten without fear. In this lies true courage. One who lets himself be abused through fear of being beaten is neither man nor beast. India is today learning the lesson of manliness. It will win swaraj if it masters this lesson aright.

[1] The Preserver in the Hindu Trinity

THREE FEARS

The three articles of Shri Deshbandhu[1] published before his imprisonment are indicative of his ecstatic state of mind, and are worth pondering over. "Remain peaceful in thought, word and deed." "Win over the Moderates, too, with gentleness." These are immortal words and are all the more beautiful for being penned at the time that they were. There are equally beautiful sentences describing the three fears. He says: "We have conquered the fear of prison", and then, as if addressing his son: "We have almost conquered the second fear—that of being beaten." The third fear is of facing bullets. When we have conquered that, swaraj is bound to follow. In fact, the key to swaraj lies in conquering this fear. If we could shed our fear of beatings or of death, neither the Government nor the bad characters can lord it over us, and we can win swaraj only if we have among us people who have conquered these three types of fear, otherwise we shall never get it.

BREACH OF PROMISE

A gentleman writes:[2]

This is but simple justice. The only difference is that I did not give the promise relying on my own strength. I am no more than the people's servant. I am their representative, their clerk. A clerk cannot make promises on his own. If, therefore, the Ali Brothers and their colleagues are not free on 31st December, I will put the blame on my correspondent and on the people. I will put it on the people of Bombay. I shall have been deceived by those very people who attended hundreds of meetings to hear me. I was taken in by the spectacle of the crowds on the 17th and the blazing bonfire on that occasion and I said: "This evening I shall leave for Bardoli and Anand and put them to the test, and I believe that we shall win swaraj in the middle of December through the civil disobedience which will be started there and because of the peace you have preserved; we shall get the prison gates opened and welcome the Ali Brothers, Gangadharrao Deshpande and others in our midst." In saying this, I put my faith in the people of Bombay and India. The entire nation will have

[1] C. R. Das

[2] The extract is not translated here. The correspondent had said that if Gandhiji failed to secure the release of the Ali Brothers before December 31, as he had promised he would, he would invite the same charge of breach of promise which he levelled against Lloyd George.

committed breach of promise if the Ali Brothers and others are not released this month. I, too, may be included among the guilty. Let people think that I was rather simple-minded to have reposed such faith. No matter what they say, I will always act on such faith.

According to me, however, the actual result is as good as the fulfilment of the promise. Is not the imprisonment of Lalaji, Das, Motilalji, Abul Kalam Azad, Mohiuddin, Salamatullah, Agha Safdar, Jawaharlal and others the same thing as securing the release of the Ali Brothers? Those hundreds who have accompanied them have gone to fetch the people who are in jail. It is for us to reinforce their efforts. If the country remains completely peaceful and, at the same time, people continue to court arrest, if they let their heads be broken and lay down their lives, we shall certainly be able to secure the release of the prisoners. I assure the correspondent that the imprisonment of the leaders has warmed the hearts of the Ali Brothers so much that their chains have fallen away, so to say. Occasionally, obstacles like the thoughtless behaviour of the people of Sialkot obstruct our progress, to our great loss. The people got excited when Agha Safdar was arrested. Some broke into the prison and some insulted the Magistrate. It is utterly wrong of us to use force or insult or abuse anyone. If, nevertheless, people go on committing errors, what is their poor representative to do? If he feels very unhappy, he may at the most resign and run away to the Himalayas.

Errors in "Navajivan"

Another gentleman has pointed out some errors in *Navajivan*. My inquiry shows that there have been no such errors as he believes to have been made. In case, however, other readers also are under such misapprehension, in order to clear it I should like to say that I do not write all that appears in *Navajivan*, that I cannot go through all of it and also that I do not translate my articles which appear in *Young India*. Utmost care is taken to avoid errors. My co-worker who does the translation is, in my opinion, the best I could find. But even when everyone makes an honest effort, errors will occasionally remain. Translating from one language into another is always more difficult than it appears. The original meaning can be preserved to some extent only if one has equal command over both the languages and is acquainted with the subject-matter. It is for this reason that a translation has always less value than the original. The reader, therefore, may rest assured that he will discover no error in *Navajivan* which has

remained there through negligence and that, when any error important enough to need correction is pointed out, it will be corrected immediately on attention being drawn to it.

WITH BLOWING OF CONCHES

The circumstances under which Deshbandhu Das was arrested are interesting. He was arrested in his own house. When the police arrived at about four in the afternoon, all were having tea. Mr. Sasmal, the Secretary, went downstairs to meet the police. On his introducing himself, he was arrested. Meanwhile, Deshbandhu Das had also gone down.

"Do you wish to arrest me?"

"Yes, if you please."

"Well, I am ready."

Having said this, Deshbandhu did not go up to meet his wife but accompanied the police. When the carriage taking him away came out, people outside shouted with joy and the women upstairs blew conches. In Bengal, it is customary to blow the conch when welcoming a person or bidding farewell to anyone on an auspicious occasion. This is regarded as a good omen. When women give up crying on their husbands, sons or fathers being arrested and, instead, rejoice on the occasion, knowing that their imprisonment will serve the country and dharma, we shall see dharma prevail and *adharma* destroyed. I, therefore, see in this blowing of the conch India's victory.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-12-1921

26. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

Sunday [December 18, 1921][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am sure the reason for the shabby get-up of the *Independent* is defective machinery.

It is certainly proposed to have a resolution about volunteers passed at the Congress. Only the right type of men will be enrolled. You must have seen the draft.

Please let me know whether Swaruprani and other ladies are likely to come[2] and, if yes, when.

Hand over the accompanying letter to Mrs. Joseph[3].

Godbole is already here. Malaviyaji is busy with preparations for the Conference.

Let me know about your and Durga's health.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Since Mrs. Joseph has gone to Calcutta, I am sending her letter to the address given by her.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11425

[1] In his letter of December 15, 1921, to Mahadev Desai, Gandhiji had expressed the wish that Godbole should go to Ahmedabad. He is mentioned in this letter as being "already here". Evidently, this letter was written on the Sunday following the letter of December 15.

[2] To attend the Congress session at Ahmedabad

[3] Wife of George Joseph

27. TELEGRAM TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR[1]

[On or after *December 18, 1921*]

Ordinary
ACHARYA
SALEM

NO DIFFICULTY SHRADDHA[2].

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7744

28. TELEGRAM TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA[3]

December 19, 1921

MALAVIYA

SAW JAMNADAS KUNZRU. PLEASE DO NOT WORRY REPRESSION. CONFERENCE WILL BE ABORTIVE UNLESS GOVERNMENT TRULY PENITENT AND ANXIOUS SETTLE THREE THINGS.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7730

[1] Sent in reply to Vijayaraghavachariar's telegram of December 17, 1921, received by Gandhiji on the 18th, which read: "Local situations best handled after Congress. Can you arrange accommodation for performing *shraddha*. Also remember we can legally elect only acting substitute for Sriyut Das who must remain permanent President throughout year."

[2] The Hindu ceremony of oblation for the spirit of deceased ancestors

[3] Sent in reply to Malaviya's telegram of December 16, 1921; *vide* footnote to "Draft Telegram to Madan Mohan Malaviya", 16-12-1921.

29. TELEGRAM TO C. R. DAS AND ABUL KALAM AZAD[1]

December 19, 1921

C. R. DAS
A. K. AZAD

YOUR WIRE. COMPOSITION DATE CONFERENCE SHOULD BE PREVIOUSLY DETERMINED. RELEASE SHOULD INCLUDE PRISONERS CONVICTED FOR "FATWAS"[2] INCLUDING KARACHI ONES. SUBJECT TO THESE CONDITIONS IN ADDITION YOURS WE CAN IN MY OPINION WAIVE HARTAL.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7730

30. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI[3]

Tuesday, December 20, 1921

. . . I shall be staying in Khadi Nagar[4] from the 22nd instant. You also may stay there. I shall keep you with or near me. Your leg will soon be better here. The climate here is quite suitable for such wounds.

[From Gujarati]
Bapuni Prasadi, p. 41

[1] Sent in reply to Das and Maulana Azad's telegram of December 19, 1921, which read: "We recommend calling off hartal on following conditions; 1. Government calling a conference soon consider all questions raised by Congress. 2. Withdrawal of recent Government *communique* and police and magisterial orders. 3. Releasing all prisoners under this new law unconditionally. Reply immediately care of Superintendent, Presidency Jail, Calcutta."

[2] Decrees of Muslim divines

[3] 1894-1951; social worker and author; co-worker of Gandhiji; Secretary, Bombay Congress Committee, 1922-23

[4] The venue of the thirty-sixth session of the Indian National Congress, Ahmedabad

31. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS ON ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE

[December 20, 1921][1]

Referring to Lord Ronaldshay's speech at the Bengal Legislative Council on Monday last, Mr. Gandhi made the following statement to the correspondent of the Associated Press at his Ashram late in the night:

I have read Lord Ronaldshay's speech in the Bengal Legislative Council. Whilst I appreciate the note of conciliation about it, I cannot help saying that it is most misleading. I do not want to criticize those parts of the speech which lend themselves to criticism. I simply want to say that the present situation is entirely his own and the Viceroy's doing. In spite of my strong desire to avoid suspecting the Government of India and the Local Governments of a wish to precipitate a conflict with the people, up to now all that I have heard and read leads me to the conclusion that my suspicion is justified. Whilst I do not wish to deny the existence of some sort of pressure, even intimidation, on the part of individuals, I do wish emphatically to deny that in connection with the phenomenal hartal on the 17th November in Calcutta, there was any intimidation, organized or initiated by or on behalf of the local Congress or the Khilafat Committees. On the contrary, I am certain that the influence exerted by both these bodies was in the direction of avoiding all intimidation. Moral pressure there certainly was and will always be in all big movements, but it must be clear to the simplest understanding that a complete hartal such as Calcutta witnessed on the 17th November would be an impossibility by mere intimidation. But assume that there was intimidation. Was there any reason for disbanding Volunteer Corps, prohibiting public meetings and enforcing laws which are under promise of repeal? Why has no attempt been made to prove a single case of intimidation? It grieves me to have to say that the Governor of Bengal has brought in the discovery of sword-sticks in one place in Calcutta to discredit large public organizations. Who intimidated the people into observing a complete hartal in Allahabad after all the leaders were arrested and in spite of the reported undue official pressure that was exercised

[1] A brief report of the interview appeared in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 21-12-1921, under the date line "Ahmedabad, December 20".

upon shopkeepers and *ghariwallas*[1] at that place? Again His Lordship says :

> If we are to assume that this development means there is genuine desire to bring about improvement, there must be a favourable atmosphere. In other words, it will be generally agreed that truce must be an essential preliminary to any possible conference. If responsible leaders of non-co-operation now come forward with the definite assurance that this is the correct interpretation, I should then say we were in sight of such a change of circumstances as would justify Government in reconsidering the position. But words must be backed by deeds. If I were satisfied only that there was a general desire for the conference and that responsible non-co-operation leaders were prepared to take action, then I should be prepared to recommend my Government to take steps in consonance with the altered situation.

This is highly misleading. If wherever the words "non-co-operation leaders" occur, the word "Government" were put in and if the whole of the statement came from a non-co-operator, it would represent the correct situation. Non-co-operators have really to do nothing, for they have precipitated nothing. They are over-cautious. The disturbance in Bombay[2] was allowed to override their keen desire to take up aggressive civil disobedience but in the present circumstances the phrase "civil disobedience" is really a misnomer. What non-co-operators are doing today, I claim, every co-operator would do tomorrow under similar circumstances. When the Government of India or the local Governments attempt to make our political existence or agitation, no matter how peaceful, an utter impossibility, may we not resist such attempt by every lawful means at our disposal? I cannot imagine anything more lawful or more natural than that we should continue our volunteer organizations purging them of every tendency to become violent and continue also to hold public meetings taking the consequences of such a step. Is it not proof of the law-abiding instinct of hundreds of young men and old men that they have meekly, without offering any defence and without complaining, accepted imprisonment for having dared to exercise their elementary rights in the face of Government prosecution? And so it is the Government which is to prove its genuine desire for a conference and an ultimate settlement. It is the Government which has to arrest the fatal course along which repression is taking it. It is the Government that is to prove to non-co-operators its *bona fides* before it can

[1] Drivers of carriages
[2] On November 17, 1921

expect them to take part in any conference. When the Government does that, it will find that there is an absolutely peaceful atmosphere. Non-co-operation, when the Government is not resisting anything except violence, is a most harmless thing.There is really nothing for us to suspend. We cannot be expected, until there is actual settlement or guarantee of settlement, to ask schoolboys to return to Government schools or lawyers to resume practice or public men to become candidates for the Councils or titleholders to ask for return of titles. In the nature of things, it is, therefore, clear that non-co-operators have to do nothing. Speaking personally, I can certainly say that if there is a genuine desire for a conference, I would be the last person to advise precipitating aggressive civil disobedience, which certainly it is my intention to do immediately I am entirely satisfied that the people have understood the secret of non-violence; and let me say the last ten days' events have shown that the people seem clearly to understand its inestimable value. If then the Government recognizes that non-co-operators mean business and intend to suffer limitlessly for the attainment of their goal, let the Government unconditionally retrace its steps, cancel the notifications about disbandment of volunteer organizations and prohibition of public meetings and release all those men in the different provinces who have been arrested and sentenced for so-called civil disobedience or for any other purpose given under the definition of non-co-operation but excluding acts of violence, actual or intended. Let the Government come down with a heavy hand on every act of violence or incitement to it, but we must claim the right for all time of expressing our opinions freely and educating public opinion by every legitimate and non-violent means. It is, therefore, the Government who have really to undo the grave wrong they have perpetrated and they can have the conference they wish in a favourable atmosphere. Let me also say that so far as I am concerned I want no conference to consider the ways and means of dealing with non-co-operation. The only conference that can at all avail at this stage is a conference called to deal with the causes of the present discontent, namely, the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs and swaraj. Any conference again which can usefully sit at the present stage must be a conference that is really representative and not a conference to which only those whom the Government desire are invited.

Young India, 22-12-1921

32. *TELEGRAM TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA*[1]

[On or after *December 20, 1921*]

REGRET EXCEEDINGLY INABILITY GIVE UNDERTAKING ASKED. NON-CO-OPERATION CAN CEASE ONLY AFTER SATISFACTORY RESULT CONFERENCE. IN NO CASE HAVE I ANY AUTHORITY DECIDE FOR CONGRESS.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7730

33. *TELEGRAM TO MAHADEV DESAI*[2]

[On or after *December 20, 1921*]

MAHADEV DESAI,
ANAND BHAVAN,
ALLAHABAD

BRAVO, GET AS MANY VOLUNTEER COPYISTS AS POSSIBLE. MULTIPLY ON RONEO.[3] GIVE BRIEFEST NEWS AND INFORMING ARTICLE. DAILY VOLUNTEERS TO SELL PAPER.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 7748

[1] This was in reply to Malaviya's telegram of December 20, 1921 which read: "Implore you wire immediately to following effect: If points mentioned in Das's telegram to you accepted and composition and date conference agreed upon, you will call off hartal and see that pending conclusion of proposed conference non-co-operation activities other than those relating to national education, swadeshi and prohibition of intoxicants without picketing in any case will be suspended and that a real truce will be observed on your side. Such assurance essential in best interests of cause we all hold dear."

[2] This was in reply to Mahadev Desai's telegram of December 20, 1921 which read: "Security forfeited this morning. Notice served says articles "Mrs. Motilal Nehru's Message" and "Let Us Also See It Through" contained words having tendency to interfere administration law order. Next notice wired *Young India*. Intend issuing manuscript paper from tomorrow. Wire detailed instruction though hourly expecting arrest."

[3] To bring out the handwritten *Independent; vide* "Notes", 22-12-1921, under the sub-title "The *Independent* Suppressed".

34. *TELEGRAM TO SHYAM SUNDER CHAKRAVARTY*[1]

[On or after *December 21, 1921*]

MY OPINION EITHER CONFERENCE CAN TAKE PLACE WITHOUT SUSPENSION NON-CO-OPERATION OR IF TRUCE ESSENTIAL TERMS CONFERENCE ITS COMPOSITION ETC. MUST BE PREVIOUSLY SETTLED. WE ARE NOT OFFERING AGGRESSIVE CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE IF GOVERNMENT MEAN WELL THEY SHOULD RETRACE STEPS BY UNCONDITIONALLY WITHDRAWING NOTIFICATION DISBANDMENT AND PUBLIC MEETINGS AND DOING PARTIAL REPARATION BY DISCHARGING THOSE UNWARRANTABLY IMPRISONED. WAS IT NOT WICKED ENFORCE LAWS WHICH WERE UNDER PROMISE OF REPEAL? LET THEM PUT DOWN VIOLENCE VEILED OPEN OR INTENDED BUT WE MUST RESIST WITH OUR LIVES THIS WANTON VIOLENT SUPPRESSION FREEDOM OPINION.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7730

35. *TELEGRAM TO JAMNADAS DWARKADAS*[2]

[On or after *December 21, 1921*]

MY WORD TO YOU ABIDES. PREPARED INDIVIDUALLY UNCONDITIONALLY ATTEND ANY CONFERENCE. VICEROY PUTTING YOU WRONG TRACK. TELL ME CONCRETE TERMS TO BE

[1] Sent in reply to Chakravarty's telegram of December 20, 1921, received by Gandhiji on the 21st which read: "Bengal opinion favours opportunity for negotiation which proposed conference will afford giving assurance of real truce. Thought reasonable releases suggested by you may be expected before conference actually meets. Wire advice immediately."

[2] Sent in reply to Jamnadas Dwarkadas's telegram of December 21, 1921, which read: "Can you imagine how heart-breaking it is for me. Cannot express despair in words. Came full of hope only to find that your subsequent telegram to Panditji and Das practically cancelled all you told me. Fail to understand. I venture to believe it is not yet too late. Earnestly beg of you to respond to the appeal for truce, in larger interest of country. You of all cannot fail to take higher standpoint. Your consent may yet enable us to bring about conference which country at large including large number of your followers desire. Pray wire fully."

OBSERVED ONLY. CANNOT WAIVE VOLUNTARY HARTAL TILL TERMS STATED TELEGRAM[1] DAS SATISFIED.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7753

36. NOTES

December 19, 1921

A DELECTABLE ASSORTMENT

Here are titbits I pick up from letters, wires, and reports which have deluged me during the week :

> "Two Mohammedan workers have just returned with heads broken by a zemindar supporter of the Government." Sind.
>
> "Volunteer organizations declared unlawful. Provincial, District, and other Congress offices, searched throughout Bihar. Papers, account books, cyclostyles, Congress seals, swaraj flags seized. Provincial Committee resolved to continue Volunteer Corps enlistment. Public enthusiastic and cheerful." Bihar.
>
> "Today (17th December) armed police took possession of the Shankar Hall, a religious institution of the Assam *Mahapurushia* sect in a part of which Barpeta Congress Committee established office. The action was without notice to the Shankar Hall authorities. The guarding constables are smoking inside the hall which is strictly prohibited, thus wounding religious feeling of the people. The belongings of the Congress were carelessly thrown out by police who have been using it as their dwelling house, thus preventing people from performing religious ceremonies. People are still adhering to non-violence. Work proceeding rapidly." Barpeta, Assam.
>
> "Houses of Pandit Rambhuj Dutt Chowdhary, Professor Ruchiram Sahany, Lala Lajpat Rai, Congress Committee offices, Khilafat offices, Sirajdin's house, Sarala Devi's[2] press searched. Volunteers in Lahore and Amritsar severely beaten by the police. Prisoners reported to be caned in the Central Jail, Lahore."

I have given this assortment to show that swaraj is within easy grasp, if we can survive this treatment. Surviving means

[1] Of December 19, 1921

[2] Sarladevi Chowdharani, wife of Pandit Rambhuj Dutt Chowdhari and niece of Rabindranath Tagore. She and her husband became followers of Gandhiji in 1919.

bravely facing it without losing temper. Let the administrators of an expiring system have the pleasure of being able to say, "We tried but failed." When the moth describes its violent revolutions round a lamp, he is surely dying. So is this Government fast disintegrating under the weight of its own violence. What is it, if it be not madness, to search private homes and public offices when they must know that there is nothing hidden, when they know that non-co-operators have no secrets? But these searches are no doubt intended to make the people feel as uncomfortable as they possibly could be made to feel. A correspondent tells me that already the jails are feeling the pressure. The jail authorities were unprepared for the number of men who are being daily sentenced. They have no room and no work for so many. Naturally, therefore, resort must be had to other methods of terrorizing. Consequently, we must expect even assaults with greater frequency. The reported caning is the worst thing yet come to light. I still hope it is untrue. I have taken the bit from *The Tribune* which is one of the most responsible journals that India has the good fortune to possess. This report reminds one of the lashings during the martial law regime in Lahore. It was at first denied but subsequently admitted. The reader will remember Col. Johnson justifying the use of the lash as a deterrent and as a swift method of punishment when imprisonment does not answer.[1] Well, whether the report be true or not, we must prepare for the worst. No suffering is too great a price for freedom. It will be all the dearer when we have paid a heavy price for it.

But worse in some respects is the occupation of a temple in Barpeta. It is a grave and uncalled for provocation. But I must plead for non-violence even under such grave provocation. Let it be remembered that our pledge is unconditional. We must stand by it at all cost. An intruder cannot defile a temple. Only votaries can by their unworthiness. In the language of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, let us think of the greater temple, namely, India, which has been defiled for so many years by our submission to slavery. And if we have stood that defilement all these long years, let us not be provoked into madness by the illegal encroachments upon local temples and their still greater defilement by the intruders' abuse of them. Is Lord Reading prepared to plead extenuation even in this case on the ground that the officials are engaged in the performance of a very trying duty?

[1] *Vide* Vol. XVII, pp. 114-292.

Chittagong's Toll

The same day that I received a graphic description of things in Chittagong, I received too a wire advising me that Babu Prasanna Kumar Sen[1] who had sent the letter was also arrested. The number of volunteers arrested there had reached a total of three hundred. The reader will find the following excerpts from Babu Prasanna Kumar Sen's letter to be interesting:

> So long we have been literally at our wit's end to find out the best means of beginning civil disobedience. Following the resolution of the Working Committee at Delhi, we set out carefully educating our people to strict non-violence. Our propagandists were to return by the 8th December, but before the due date the Government of Bengal goaded by the Anglo-Indian extremists went almost mad over the hartal in Calcutta on the 17th November, rushed on to take advantage of forgotten laws and forsaken methods and proclaimed volunteer associations illegal. Thus it has come to our help.
>
> For the last few days national volunteers in batches of not more than five have been going out with grim determination and cheerful anxiety to find themselves in jail. The discipline and self-restraint they are exhibiting are excellent, and if you do not think me guilty of exaggeration, I should not hesitate to declare them in this respect equal to best disciplined soldiers in the battle-fields. Within the last three days total arrests number sixty-three. Volunteers are pouring in from the moffussil and it is believed in no time authorities will find the Chittagong jail too small to accommodate the brave lads.

Thus the Government has declared peace to be unlawful and keepers of it to be criminals. It puts the people through periodical discipline to observe peace not of their free will but only under restraint.

Mixed Motives

A friend tells me that the Government is suppressing the volunteer organizations because it is not sure that they will always remain peaceful. The correspondent adds :

> They think at present under your mandate they are non-violent, but any day your orders or the orders of your successors may change and the volunteers may be asked to be armed in military fashion—a standing rebel army against the Government army.

The other hypothesis suggested by the same correspondent is that the Government dread this non-violence more than an armed

[1] Lawyer and Secretary, District Congress Committee, Chittagong

revolt. The police-officers are getting tired and unnerved by being ordered to molest people who do not retaliate. Some of them confess,

> Non-violence is a dreadful foe to meet. Violence we understand and do not mind. But it makes one feel so small to beat a man who does not beat you back.

The fact is that both the suggestions are sound. The Government dread the future and want to guard against the people acquiring the power to offer armed resistance and they dread the rapid evolution of peaceful strength. In short, they want us to be neither men nor women. They would have us belong to the neuter gender.

Unsexing Process

Belgaum furnishes a forcible illustration of the unsexing process being tried at present in India. A friend has prepared for me the following summary of a report from Belgaum :

> The district authorities of Belgaum have devised an original method of suppressing non-co-operation. Mr. Hayter, the Superintendent of Police, issued a circular calling upon all Sub-Inspectors to use their power to stop the spread of non-co-operation. The Sub-Inspectors on their part circularized the village police that "all non-co-operation speakers should be forcibly suppressed. They should not be allowed to enter villages and should be expelled from villages. And speakers should be prevented from speaking. The Deputy Superintendent of Police hopes that it is enough if police *patels* are given to understand this. Superior officers will render proper assistance in the matter." But when the ex-lawyers in the non-co-operation camp raised the question of law in this matter, the D.S.P. came down with his circular No. 6359 of 1921 saying that section 51(B) of the District Police Act which empowered the police to prevent the commission of offence was sufficient for his purpose. The D.S.P. further says, "Wherever these N.C.O.[1] gentry open their mouths in public, they commit offences under section 124A or 153A Indian Penal Code. Therefore, police-officers should do everything possible, consistent with law, to render the offence difficult."

The humour of all this was that armed with these notifications, the Sub-Inspector of Bailhongal, a taluka in Belgaum, actually proceeded physically to stop the mouth of one of the Secretaries of the District Congress Committee, when the latter was about to deliver a speech at Bailhongal. Let the Secretary speak:

[1] Non-co-operation

. . . When I rose to address the meeting, the Sub-Inspector of police stood in front of me and told me not to speak. Asked for a written order he refused to give one but showed me Circular No. 6359 referred to above . . . . He further told me that if I persisted in speaking, he would physically stop my mouth by laying his hand upon it . . . This being a somewhat novel proceeding . . . I obeyed the order and did not speak. The local Magistrate and *Mamlatdar* was present throughout. . . .

Let me complete this lurid picture by adding a summary of events in Allahabad :

On the 25th November last a *Gazette Extraordinary* was issued by the Government extending the application of the Criminal Amendment Act of 1908 to the U.P. and declaring all Volunteer Corps of Khilafat, Congress and similar institutions having as their object boycott of foreign cloth, picketing or boycott of the Prince's visit as unlawful assemblies.

On the same day, according to the announcement previously made, a meeting of the Provincial Congress Committee was held which resolved to form a Volunteer Board on the lines laid down by the Working Committee. A form of pledge was drawn up and 75 members present at the meeting signed it as volunteers. The first victim of Government wrath was Pandit Harkaran Nath Mishra of Lucknow who had gone to Lakhmipur to address a meeting. Then followed the arrests at Lucknow of Maulana Khaliquzzaman and others of the Congress and Khilafat Committees on the morning of 6th December. On the evening of the same day Pandits Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru[1], Purushottamdas Tandon[2] and others were arrested, who have since been sentenced to various terms of imprisonment for enlisting as volunteers. Then followed a short pause which was broken on the 11th instant by the arrest of 67 volunteers, mostly while painting a placard on the walls of Anand Bhavan[3] requesting the people not to participate in the Prince's reception. The climax, however, was reached on the 13th instant when the whole Provincial Congress Committee was besieged by the police while in session, and the whole body of members excepting the two secretaries and two others were arrested. The Committee sat at 1 p.m. and continued the meeting till 9 in the evening. At about half past five, the police under one D.S.P.

[1] 1889-1964; statesman and writer; India's first Prime Minister, 1947-64; Bharat Ratna; author of *Glimpses of World History*, *Autobiography*, etc.

[2] 1882-1962; lawyer and eminent leader of U.P.; founder, Hindi Sahitya Sammelan; President, Indian National Congress, 1950; Bharat Ratna. He was at that time Chairman of the Allahabad Municipality.

[3] Motilal Nehru's residence

named Mr. Fergusson arrived with some six motor vans for carrying prisoners, entered the premises of the Committee and blocked all passages. They searched the office till 9. When, the meeting having terminated, the members informed the D.S.P. of their intention to leave, the D.S.P. went over to the meeting and demanded the proceedings to be shown to him and finding a resolution therein recommending all district and tehsil Congress Committees to organize Volunteer Corps, declared that an offence had been committed under the Criminal Law Amendmnt Act. He then asked all present one by one whether they were members of the committee and had supported the resolution. All the members having replied in the affirmative, he arrested fifty-five of them including all the prominent workers of the province.

During the search B. Shitalasahai, editor of the *Swaraj* was kicked, boxed and otherwise assaulted by Mr. Fergusson so much so that blood came out of his skin. But he bore all that patiently. Several others also were badly treated and pushed and assaulted by the same officer. Everybody kept his temper. There was no search or arrest warrant produced, nor did the officers have their bodies searched before beginning the search. All papers, records and seals of the Provincial Congress Committee have been seized by the police and put under sealed locks.

It is evident to me that this utter disregard of law and decency is not an individual act but is part of a deliberate plan to suppress all healthy public life, to provoke popular violence and then issue a much enlarged edition of Jallianwala. With the best intention to put a charitable construction on the series of acts described above, I have been unable to come to any other conclusion.

Viceroy's Share

I am sorry that I suspect Lord Reading of complicity in the plot to unman India for eternity. A friend has suggested an alternative. He says that whilst Lord Reading must be held responsible for the threats used by him in his recent utterances, he might be quite unaware of the lawlessness of the subordinate officials or that he must have become helpless, the subordinate officials having simply disregarded his wishes to be strictly within the law. I must reject both the interpretations. Lord Reading, if he is trying legitimately to suppress popular lawlessness, must study and regulate the development of his campaign which he will not even allow to be called repression. If his subordinates being interested parties have gone out of hand, he must forthwith resign, at least publicly disown and condemn such illegalities and assaults and not attempt to excuse them on the flimsy plea of "trying times". I have myself

suggested a possible explanation. His Excellency sympathizes with our aspirations, and knowing his own countrymen, realizes that we have got to be severely tried before they think of coming to terms; he is, therefore, trying and directing repression to see how far we are capable of bearing it and, therefore, sincere in our desire for freedom, and then having made out a case for us his clients, desires to compel a settlement. I am afraid, however, that I have to state the case only to be rejected. Human nature does not work quite that way. Lord Reading is not so entirely selfless, and if he is, he cannot possibly remain in charge of a Government which under its present constitution can give no relief to the people. It is, therefore, with the greatest reluctance that I am forced to conclude that Lord Reading is trying to emasculate India by forcibly making free speech and popular organization impossible. I am prepared to believe that in all this he thinks that he is doing good to us and that we are not yet fit to be called men and women. He will soon have his eyes opened. We must not quarrel with his belief. Nor need we feel anxious about it. Let us acquit ourselves like men and women and we shall find that everything and everybody become favourable to us.

Round Table Conference

The pages of *Young India* are rarely occupied with an examination of what rulers think. It is an idle speculation. But as the papers are discussing, advising and debating upon such a conference, I have considered it appropriate to devote some space to an examination of the mentality of the chief actor in the drama now being played in India. In my opinion, such a conference is bound to prove abortive till Lord Reading is disabused of the idea that non-co-operation is confined to a few misguided zealots. If he wants co-operation and contentment, he must placate non-co-operators. He must see that non-co-operation is not the disease, it is the chief symptom of a disease. The disease consists in a triple injury to the people of India. And no palliative will soothe the patient so long as the centre of the disease is not tackled. Outside the redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs and the grant of swaraj in accordance with a scheme framed by the chosen representatives of the people, repression is the easiest and the shortest way to a settlement. No Viceroy can, I freely confess, possibly allow things to drift. I admit that he must suppress civil disobedience as he would an armed rebellion unless he is prepared to remedy the evil towards which the disobedience is directed. Abstract truth has no value unless it incarnates in human beings who represent it

by proving their readiness to die for it. Our wrongs live because we only pretend to be their living representatives. The only way we can prove our claim is by readiness to suffer in the discharge of our trust. We are on a fair way to proving ourselves worthy of it. But I hardly think we can yet claim to have given conclusive proof. Who knows if we shall not be found wanting when imprisonment means utter discomfort and even lashes? Who knows how many of us are ready to mount the gallows?

In my opinion, therefore, a conference at which the Government is represented will be useful only when the latter has tried the non-co-operators to its satisfaction and measured their strength in quantity and quality.

But since non-co-operation is a method of cultivating public opinion, I would certainly welcome a conference of co-operators and non-co-operators. I am sure that they want the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs redressed, I am aware that they want freedom for the country as much as non-co-operators. It has given me much pleasure to see almost every moderate journal condemning the present repressive policy of the Government. I had expected nothing less. And I know that if non-co-operators keep self-restraint, do not become violent, do not abuse their opponents, every liberal will become a non-co-operator. Indeed even Englishmen will veer round to the non-co-operators and the Government will, as it then must, capitulate. That is the expected and intended working of the method of non-co-operation. It reduces friction to a minimum. And if today it seems to have produced a contrary effect, it is because non-co-operators have only now begun to see that it is not enough to have been fairly non-violent in deed. It is equally necessary to be non-violent in word and thought. It is unlawful for a non-co-operator even to wish ill to his enemies. What our opponents dread most is undisciplined violence breaking out under cover of non-violence. They do not believe in our sincerity, i.e., of the vast majority of us. They see in it nothing but chaos and perdition. This repression, therefore, has come as a blessing in disguise. It is showing them and us that we have acquired influence over the populace to keep it under check even under provoking circumstances. Our restraint has not yet been tried long enough to be considered permanent. We are still in a state of uncertainty. The people in Sialkot did stray away from the line, be it even so slightly. We have had so many such little jerks that we do not possess the sense of security required to inspire an outsider's faith in the movement. I would, therefore, welcome every opportunity of meeting the co-operators

on neutral ground or for showing the *bona fides* of non-co-operators. The Government has shown itself in true colours by declaring its intention to suppress non-co-operation as such. It was on safe ground so long as it sought to put down violence or incitement to or approval of it. I have, therefore, no doubt that the co-operators will rise to a man against the Government madness—this vain attempt to stifle expression of opinion and agitation for redress of grievances. But I warn our friends against entertaining the idea of a conference with the Government till they find that it is truly penitent and means to appreciate the popular side. Let there be no conference on the boycott of welcome or the right of holding public meetings or forming associations of volunteers or others so long as they have no violent purpose. Boycott of the welcome will and must continue so long as the people's wishes are flouted, and public meetings and associations are elementary rights on which there can be no parleying. We must fight for them.

Let it be understood that non-co-operators are not offering civil disobedience that they had intended to. Their insistence on calling and attending public meetings and forming peaceful volunteer associations ought not to be dignified by the name of civil disobedience. Non-co-operators are merely on the defensive. They have not taken, as they certainly intend to take, the offensive as soon as they are fairly certain of non-violent atmosphere. The Government has obliged them by anticipating them and providing them with a test of their own capacity.

December 20

THE RIGHT OF PICKETING

The Government must have thought that Bombay having stopped picketing of liquor shops, all other places would necessarily follow suit. But Poona has shown that it is a right that cannot be abandoned without good cause. As soon as orders were issued to prohibit picketing, Mr. Kelkar[1] says:

> We decided to break the orders and this morning notice has been sent to the District Magistrate that we shall even today proceed to break the order at a place and time specified. Myself, my son and Messrs Bhopatkar, Gokhale, Paranjpye and about 16 others will form the first batch. Succession will, I am sure, be provided for by those who are left behind. Let us see how far Poona gives an account of itself in this matter.

[1] N. C. Kelkar (1872-1947); political leader from Maharashtra; author and journalist

The party went, they were arrested, their names taken, and they were let off. Fresh parties have since been regularly going with the same result. Of course Maharashtra will never lag behind in suffering. It possesses the hardiest body of workers in India. It is remarkable how in every province the front rank leaders have run the boldest risks. But whilst Mr. Kelkar and his party had not the good fortune to be imprisoned, the Ajmer people fared better. On prohibition notices being issued, the workers regarding picketing as a "religious right" took up the challenge. Pandit Chand Karan Sarda says:

> *Swaraj Sena*[1] volunteers were posted on all liquor shops. The Government also posted its police force and mounted *sawars* on each shop with orders to arrest the pickets. As soon as one batch was arrested, the reserve volunteers took their place. The police arrested only 17 volunteers who were summarily tried and sentenced to 4 months and 3 weeks' rigorous imprisonment.

They offered no defence. No more arrests seem to have been made at Ajmer. Where picketing can be practised without violence and ill will against the liquor dealer or the drinker, it is a moral duty. That it has advanced the cause of temperance as nothing else has, no one can deny. Only the other day at Karamsad[2] the Christian and Hindu *Dheds* gratefully informed me that as a result of picketing they had banished drink from their midst. Bombay has forfeited the right for the time being at any rate because of its wanton and malicious destruction of Parsi liquor shops and its disgraceful behaviour towards Parsis and Christians on the fateful 17th November and the two following days. I hope, however, that wherever picketing is practised, it will be entrusted to men or women of unimpeachable character and carried on in the friendliest spirit. We do not want to make people virtuous by force.

Libel on Maharashtra Party

Apropos of Mr. Kelkar's letter, I must not omit to mention that the criticism passed against the leaders who went to Akola was most undeserved. Here is what Mr. Kelkar says in the letter from which I have quoted:

> Before concluding I wish earnestly to repudiate the most unkind charge levelled against me and the Akola Conference. Personally I was a mere witness and nothing more than a Regulator of Debate. None of

[1] Swaraj Army

[2] Gandhiji was at Karamsad on December 17.

> the propositions passed or rejected had my full concurrence so far as their wording went. I was negotiating for a compromise amendment, but whatever one may say about the Conference at Akola, I want you to believe that the Conference having been decided upon in July or August last was held as mere matter of course, and it is cruel to say we joined the Conference because we thought it a good opportunity for airing our views as the ranks of leaders were being depleted owing to repression, or what is worse still, for saving our skin.

I heartily endorse every word of what Mr. Kelkar says. It should be remembered that the letter was written when he was just expecting to be imprisoned.

Selling Khadi

The lead given by Shrimatis Vasantidevi Das[1] and Urmiladevi[2] in selling khadi from house to house and hawking it in streets has been quickly taken up in the other parts of the country. Shrimati Sarala Devi writes:

> I have to go immediately to the city to arrange to send 40 ladies in 20 groups under two volunteers each to sell khadi in 20 lanes.

In Madras too they are organizing similarly. I cannot conceive any better occupation for ladies especially, besides, hand-spinning than popularizing khadi by hawking it themselves. It is fine training in throwing off false pride or false modesty. And it is a most harmless challenge to the police to arrest them if they dare. But if the practice is to become common, it must be regulated by grown-up ladies of position and without any bluster. Needless to say, there should be no undue pressure put upon the public to buy. We must not sicken them. Our business is merely to take this most useful national ware to their doors and give them the choice of buying or rejecting it.

A Worthy Wife

> Gladly inform husband arrested this morning. He asked me to wire you that he went filled with joy. Hope I shall continue his work to my utmost capacity. Aligarh is peaceful yet fully energetic. Khurshed Khwaja.

I tender my congratulations to Khurshed Begum on her having sent such a noble message just as her husband was going to jail. Khwaja Saheb[3] is a barrister brought up in the lap of

[1] Wife of C. R. Das
[2] Vasantidevi's sister
[3] Khwaja Abdul Majid, then Vice-Chancellor of the Aligarh University

luxury. I have known him as a dandy conscious of his handsome features which he tried to set off with the finest fitting European clothes he could buy in the market, and I know him now as practically a fakir. He is one of the bravest and the truest of Mussulmans. He is as good a lover of India as he is of Islam. When Maulana Mahomed Ali could not possibly reside permanently at the National Muslim University, he fell back upon Khwaja Saheb who left a growing practice in Patna to serve the University. I know that Khwaja Saheb implicitly believes in non-violence but he also believes in deathless courage and knows the art of dying. Before the Rowlatt Act was born and when with some Mussulman friends I was thinking of embarking upon satyagraha for the purpose of compelling the release of the Ali Brothers[1], I asked Khwaja Saheb how many Mussulmans would join and be prepared to die without killing. He said at once,

> Shwaib[2] is certainly one. He is our Bayard *sans peur et sans reproche*. And probably, I am half of Shwaib. I am sorry I cannot give you many more names.

This talk took place in 1917 or 1916 but I have not forgotten the earnestness and the truthfulness and the humility that were written in those noble features as he was speaking the few sentences. Times have changed. Khwaja, I have no doubt, is a whole man and many more Mussulmans have proved their bravery as was expected by Khwaja Saheb. No wonder his proud wife does not hesitate to say: "Hope I shall continue his work to my utmost capacity." Let not the reader laugh incredulously. I know the Aligarh boys. They will twine themselves round Khurshed Begum as perhaps they did not in the case of Khwaja. When a pure woman adds bravery and motherliness to her purity, she becomes at once a magnet in a way no man can. Dr. Mahomed Alam will look after the brains of the boys, but she will capture their hearts and turn them into gold. And what is more, as the students have to become masters of the art of spinning, Khurshed Begum, I doubt not, will out-distance both her husband and Dr. Mahomed Alam in teaching that art. Begam Mahomed Ali has collected monies where her husband might have failed. I have already given my opinion that she is a better speaker than the Maulana. Let me take the reader into the secret that it was Shrimati Vasantidevi and Urmiladevi who set Bengal on fire. I have before me a letter

[1] Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali

[2] Shuaib Qureshi, editor of *New Era*

showing that the visit of the three ladies and their arrest struck the imagination of Bengal as the big sacrifice of Deshbandhu Das had not. It could not be otherwise. For woman is sacrifice personified. When she does a thing in the right spirit, she moves mountains. We have misused our women. We have possibly neglected them. But the spinning-wheel, thank God, is transforming them. And when all the leaders and others who are in the good books of the Government have been honoured with imprisonment, I have not the faintest doubt that the women of India will finish the work left by men and they will do it far more gracefully than men.

BABU BHAGWANDAS[1]

When Professor Kripalani and his pupils were arrested, I said to friends, "How nice if Babu Bhagwandas is arrested. After all the Professor does not belong to Banaras. But Babu Bhagwandas won't be." I did not then know that Babu Bhagwandas was the author of the very cautious leaflet which Professor Kripalani was hawking. The next day his son sent the joyful message[2] that Babuji was arrested and quite happy over the arrest. Babu Bhagwandas is a non-co-operator who has been always non-violent in thought, word and deed. He is a Sanskrit scholar. He is a deeply religious man. He is a zemindar. If Mrs. Besant[3] was the creator of the Central Hindu College, Babu Bhagwandas was its maker. His arrest, therefore, constitutes a sacrifice entirely pleasing to God. And the holy city could not possibly offer any better sacrifice. Babu Bhagwandas, as the readers of newspapers are aware, was trying to get the Congress to formulate a scheme for swaraj. He has been labouring hard for it. He has sent me a long list of suggestive questions which I have not been able to handle owing to the recent developments. His one anxiety was to avoid violence. If his arrest does not betray an anxiety on the part of the Government to invite violence, I do not know what can. Fortunately, God often overrules man's plans and every event indicates more and more certainly that He is overruling the plans of this Government. The people are calm in spite of it.

[1] Scholar and public worker; took leading part in establishing Kashi Vidyapith, a national university at Varanasi

[2] *Vide* footnote to "Telegram to Sri Prakasa", on or after 15-12-1921.

[3] Annie Besant (1847-1933); President of the Theosophical Society; President, Indian National Congress, 1917

Remarkable Proof

A remarkable proof of the fact is furnished by the following[1] from Amritsar by Lala Girdhari Lal[2]:

> Yesterday, 14th instant, 21 Punjab national volunteers passed in procession starting from Chawk Farid through Hall Bazar preaching use of khadi. Mr. Beaty, D.S.P., and M. Fakir Hussain, Sub-Inspector, asked volunteers to disperse. Volunteers offered themselves for arrest but refused to disperse. At this Mr. Beaty and M. Fakir Hussain began to beat volunteers mercilessly with cane and hunter. . . . Faces and bodies of volunteers bear marks of severe blows. Sub-Inspector used filthy abuse against Khilafat volunteers and public bore this cowardly attack silently and calmly. Volunteers only said that if police consisted of brave men, they must either arrest or shoot them (volunteers). . . . These courageous and bleeding volunteers again started swadeshi propaganda a little further up. . . . In spite of this grave provocation all is calm and quiet.

He thus amplifies the details in a letter[3] from which I take the following:

> The sight was most provoking. What I admire most is that the volunteers undauntedly began their procession again with smiling faces although their bodies were smarting with the pain of the blows and cuts of the hunter. Many feel the pain today and are not likely to be free from it for some days.
>
> I rang up D.C. on the phone and asked him under whose orders and under what law were the volunteers beaten so shamefully. He pleaded ignorance of this severe beating. D. C. said that he had given orders that volunteers' processions were to be dispersed as Government had declared National Volunteers Corps also as unlawful. He further said that his orders were to use minimum force. When I informed him that not minimum but maximum force was used, he said he would enquire. I wanted to know why he did not enforce the law and arrest the volunteers. He replied that his orders were otherwise. They do not wish to arrest ordinary volunteers.
>
> In Lahore on 13th a like treatment was meted out to the volunteers. . . . they were beaten on their backs with the butt-end of the police batons. Later on the volunteers were set free in batches one or two miles away from the city at two in the night. Their coats were removed. In this severe winter of the Punjab nothing could be more inhuman. . . . I learn that the the Punjab Government has sent circulars to all District Officers to dis-

[1] & [3] Only excerpts reproduced here

[2] President, District Congress Committee, Amritsar

perse volunteer processions by force but not to arrest them. It is done solely to humiliate as also with a view to provoke violence. . . . So far people have observed peace.

God will soon reward the patience of the Punjabis who are bearing their sufferings in the bravest manner. What is happening in the Punjab we may expect throughout India, if the supply continues and there is no room in the Government prisons for so many prisoners. In a war of give and take, too, we would have to sacrifice many lives. When we have only to give, I have no doubt that the toll will not be, cannot be, so heavy as when we take and give. This is a commercial view to take of a sacred act. But it is a true view and I see no harm in our realizing that by refraining from retaliation we make ourselves responsible for the least possible human suffering.

A Spotless Sacrifice

Police has just arrested me under 124A. Thanks to Almighty for this privilege for humble service to motherland. I go without rancour or any other feelings but that of duty done truthfully and firmly for India's liberation. I feel that I shall be serving the country not less usefully and joyfully inside the prison walls than I have endeavoured to do outside them.

Thus wires Jairamdas[1]. His letter received the same day informed me of the arrests of Mr. Vesumal Tejumal, Maulvi Fatteh Mahomed and Maulvi Syed Abbas all three prominent workers. These cases have brought up the total arrests to 95 for Sindh. I consider Jairamdas's a spotless sacrifice. I know that he had never harboured ill will even in thought, a claim that cannot be advanced for many. He has been ever punctiliously truthful and self-effacing. The Government must know that Jairamdas would never encourage or contemplate violence. He has been ever mindful to yield voluntary obedience to the laws of the state. He knows, therefore, the meaning of civil disobedience. But the only use the state can make of Jairamdas is to imprison him. It is such imprisonments that hasten the advent of swaraj in the religious sense of the term.

[1] Jairamdas Daulatram (b. 1892); Congress leader from Sind; joined Non-co-operation movement in 1920; Minister of Food and Agriculture, Government of India; Governor of Assam. He was then Secretary, Sind Provincial Congress Committee.

DOINGS IN DELHI

The sacrifice that Delhi is offering is also in the interest of peace. I am publishing the following[1] from Dr. Ansari[2] to show what extraordinary precautions Delhi is taking to keep up a peaceful atmosphere:

> On the 14th no volunteers were sent. On the morning of the 15th, 43 submitted themselves for arrest. . . .
>
> On the 16th 2 batches of volunteers comprising 40 and 46 respectively marched to Daryaganj Police Station and Sabzimandi but were not arrested in spite of their repeated requests. . . .
>
> On the 16th there was an unusual display of force on the part of the authorities. . . . There were also mounted police, a number of sergeants, the D.C., the S.P. and the D.S.P., one Magistrate and several Indian Police-officers stationed at the Kotwali. All the banks were guarded by the police and a number of police pickets were placed at different places. A crowd had gathered in front of the Kotwali as crowds always do when they see such display of force, but our men in mufti kept them on the move and perfectly peaceful. But . . . some sergeants became aggressive in dispersing the crowd and used their whips in beating the harmless people. The Indian police showed marked restraint. . . but the sergeants' assaults on the people caused a number of serious injuries to them.
>
> In spite of this violence the people showed a calm courage and did not retaliate. . . .
>
> . . . we ascertained that the cause of all this display of force was the false rumour. . . that Hakim Ajmal Khan Saheb[3] was going with a force of one thousand volunteers on the 16th.
>
> We have changed our plans for the future, when we propose to employ the volunteers in their normal duties regarding the distribution of charkhas, the collection of yarn from the different quarters, the production and sale of khadi.
>
> The fact that they have refused to arrest the volunteers is a clear proof of our moral victory, but we do not propose to rest on our oars. There is a vigorous movement set on foot in the city to enrol every adult male in the N.V.C.[4] We hope soon that every shopkeeper and his assistants, every tonga-driver, every coolie and cartman, in fact every

[1] Only excerpts reproduced here

[2] Dr. M.A. Ansari (1880-1927); physician and politician; President, Indian National Congress, 1927

[3] 1865-1927; physician and politician; President, Indian National Congress, 1921

[4] National Volunteer Corps

single inhabitant of Delhi will appear dressed in the swadeshi uniform of the N.V.C. even when following his daily vocation . . .

The letter exhibits a religious spirit about the manner of conducting the campaign in the teeth of the hooliganism of the authorities. The infection of Lahore and Amritsar is evidently spreading. The unprovoked assaults by custodians of order reported from Amritsar, Lahore and now Delhi, in the north, and their equally wanton behaviour in Calcutta, in the east, are putting a strain upon peaceful nature beyond endurance. Can anything but a fine religious spirit account for the calmness that is being sustained among the people of India?

Remarkable Pledge

To show the thorough nature of the work of ensuring peace that is being done in Delhi, I extract the following remarkable pledge from Mr. Asaf Ali's[1] letter which he wrote when he offered himself and fifty-two others for arrest:

With full consciousness of the omnipresence and omniscience of God, I declare that it shall be my solemn duty, (1) to attain swaraj by peaceful means, (2) to preserve and foster unity between the members and followers of the various communities and religions of India, (3) to regard no class or community as contemptible or untouchable, (4) to sacrifice life and property for the honour and interests of my country, (5) to wear clothes made of cloth hand-spun and hand-woven in the country, (6) to obey without demur the orders of the officers, (7) so long as I am not discharged from the Corps, to observe myself and persuade others to observe non-violence (for as long as the Congress continues to follow this policy) and (8) finally, I will cheerfully bear privations and troubles which may confront me during my connection with the National Volunteers Corps and neither I nor any of my dependents and relations expect any compensation.

The Toll from Dravida Land

Madras and Andhra are slowly but surely creeping up and I should not be surprised if the Dravidians come up to the level of Bengal which has now 1,500 imprisonments to its credit. Erode alone has done bravely in the matter of temperance. Mr. Ramaswamy Naiker[2] has, therefore, been rewarded with one month's

[1] 1888-1953; barrister and nationalist Muslim politician; took a leading part in the Khilafat Movement; India's Ambassador to the United States of America

[2] E. V. Ramaswami Naiker, a Congressman who later left the Congress and founded the Dravida Kazhagam

simple imprisonment. During the past fortnight, thirty-seven convictions have taken place already in this little place. And now Mrs. Naiker and Mr. Naiker's sister are to take up picketing. The Criminal Law Amendment Act has just been put in force there. Lord Willingdon[1] has stated his policy. Like Sir Harcourt Butler[2] he too wants to maintain the respect for law and order. We may any day, therefore, expect a perfect hurricane of arrests where at present only a breeze seems to be blowing. They are conducting Mr. Rajagopalachari's and Mr. Subramania Shastri's case under summons. The trial is practically finished. Rajagopalachari has asked for the highest penalty. I hope that the Magistrate will oblige him and transfer from friends to jailers the care of his ailing body which is causing anxiety to his fellow-workers. Like Pandit Motilalji he has been wearing away his body ever since the commencement of non-co-operation. Dr. Ansari is now the sole surviving Secretary of the Congress and I have no doubt that he will not be long getting his reward for meritorious service. The Government is preparing the country for the final declaration that the Congress and the Khilafat Committee are unlawful organizations, in which case everyone connected with them must render himself liable to arrest. Nor will such a declaration be a strange procedure. The Congress, if it is allowed to continue its peaceful career, must supplant the present Government, a contingency the latter cannot contemplate with equanimity. The Congress, if it is worth existence, cannot depart by a hair's breadth from its course and if it survives the present test, it will do so not by the sufferance of the Government but by the weight of its own unrivalled influence upon the masses. Viewed in that light, the survival of the Congress after the Government's challenge is swaraj.

Attendance a Crime

A telegram from the Lahore Publicity Board says that the Deputy Commissioner of Hazara District has warned the delegates elected to the Congress that "if they attend the Congress, they are liable to be expelled from the District under Section 36 Frontier Crime Regulations." I hope that the Congress delegates in Hazara will take up the challenge and now regard it a point of honour to attend the Congress in their full strength. The Hazara Commissioner's action is in keeping with the raiding of

[1] Governor of Madras, 1919-24; Viceroy of India, 1931-36
[2] Governor of U.P.

the Congress and Khilafat offices in Bengal, the United Provinces and Assam. The unity of method betrays unity of design and, therefore, pre-arranged plan to kill the movement by killing the Congress and the Khilafat Committees.

RESPONSE FROM BIHAR

Thus runs a wire[1] from Patna:

Another telegram reads:

> Eighteen batches volunteers paraded town 10 to 4 Monday chiefly law-courts. Appealing litigants send cases panchayats. One prominent *vakil* being requested follow example, other *vakils* abused, slapped two volunteers Habib and Abdul Majid who remained perfectly non-violent continued work more firmly. People realizing the truth of non-violence. Use of khadi getting general. Preparing for further civil disobedience.

Bihar, the land of Janaka[2] and Sita, the land of perhaps the most afflicted and docile people in all India, is a land of sorrows. Bihar is a province which has kept most non-violent. It has shown splendid results in most items of non-co-operation. Whereas eighteen months ago, the charkha and the use of khadi were unknown to Bihar, its villages today contain thousands of them, and thousands of men and women now habitually wear khadi. It contains both among its Hindus and Mussulmans, probably, the most selfless workers throughout India who work silently and without bragging. No one has uttered a whisper about the sincerity of its leaders. And yet even Bihar has come in for this ruthless interference with peaceful activity.

But it is all for the good of the country. The Bihari will feel all the stronger for the imprisonments, the kicks and the slaps if they are borne ungrudgingly, valiantly and without ill will. Let the people be tried as to their faith in non-violence, in khadi, in temperance, in avoidance of litigation, in self-restraint and self-purification. That would be also our fitness for swaraj.

THE "INDEPENDENT" SUPPRESSED

It will be remembered that immediately after Mr. George Joseph's arrest when a new declaration was made by Mr. Mahadev Desai as publisher and printer, a security of Rs. 2,000 was demanded. Under Panditji's advice, the security demanded was lodged and the paper reappeared after a day's suspension. The

[1] Not reproduced here; it reported arrests of a dozen leading men besides 150 volunteers.

[2] Father of Sita in the epic *Ramayana*

security was deposited on the 7th instant. It was forfeited on the 20th. There was no change of tone or policy, for, there was nothing to change. The *Independent* was edited by a barrister who wrote always under restraint and with dignity. On Mr. Joseph's incarceration it was taken up by Mr. Mahadev Desai with whose style the readers of *Young India* are not unfamiliar. The security was forfeited because of its articles, "Let Us Also See It Through" and "Mrs. Nehru's Message". The first contains a list of volunteers and the second is a balanced review of the position. But the local Government contend that the articles "contain words which have a tendency to interfere with the administration of the law and with the maintenance of law and order." The law we know, the notification of disbandment; the order too we know, the prohibition of the holding of public meetings. And the *Independent* has certainly, in common with the whole of the nationalist Press, encouraged interference with such law and such order.

But the Government will soon find out its mistake. The *Independent* may die but the spirit that it has evoked among the people cannot die. The *Independent* may not be printed but it can be written. If the editor is a trustee for his employers, he has also his own individuality to keep. Mahadev Desai, the editor, lives, although the printer in him may sleep for a while. And I am hoping that he will now write his paper instead of printing it. The readers will benefit by the enforced condensation of news and editorial notes. For multiplying copies I suggest the use of roneo, cyclostyle or chromograph. And if the law or its arbitrary interpretation permits the Government to confiscate even a cyclostyle or a roneo, Mr. Desai's pen can still serve the country until he himself is confiscated and lodged in the Central Jail of Allahabad. Nationalist Press proprietors beware. They may not abandon their mission till the bottom penny has been spent up in the cause.

A "HOPEFUL SIGN"

There is no doubt that all this repression has stirred the lawyers and the students throughout India. Many lawyers in Calcutta would have nothing to do with the reception to the Viceroy. Many Howrah lawyers have suspended practice. The Bar Association of the Punjab has lodged an energetic protest against the trial of Lala Lajpat Rai and others in jail and against the prohibition of attendance at the trial save to a few members of Lalaji's family. Many more pleaders in Bihar and Assam have announced suspension of practice. From Delhi, Dr. Ansari writes :

The most hopeful sign of all is the fact that our work has produced good effect on the lawyers and well-to-do people. They have formed an association for the assistance of the relatives of those who have gone to jail. Many of them have subscribed liberally from their income. So far they have arranged for a monthly sum of over Rs. 2,000 for this purpose. They have done this without any request or desire on our part, purely from a humanitarian point of view.

Students' Protest

As with the lawyers so with the students. Many Bengal colleges are practically empty. Some students have struck for a period, others indefinitely. The Dayal Singh College students resolved to use khadi dress only from the 16th instant and to boycott the welcome to the Prince. They have also voted congratulations to the leaders who are undergoing imprisonment. It is a step in the right direction that the students of the Dayal Singh College have taken. Even if the student class have not been touched by the moving appeal of Shrimati Vasantidevi to leave their colleges, they are expected to take note of and give their due share in the mighty movement that is daily gathering force. Let them ponder over items like this taken at random from the Calcutta Press :

> Two boys, Ramji Prasad of 9 and Haribans Missir of 10 years of Chataria National School were caned mercilessly in the presence of the District Magistrate under his order by his orderly for reciting the *fatwa* regarding Government service but the brave lads asked the Magistrate to do what he could to the point of bending their backs to break the bones and said that even then they would not give up reciting the *fatwa*.

Language of the Heart

This fire of suffering has brought forth some fine thoughts clothed in beautiful language. I must confess that I have seen nothing like it before in all the ponderous speeches and addresses which have tickled our ears or delighted our intellect. Whether one looks at Lalaji's manifesto, Pandit Motilalji's message, or Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's, one cannot fail to be struck with their beauty. But no one has been more touching, more fervent, more prolific than the President elect. He has poured forth short, crisp messages that have come straight from the heart. I wish some enterprising publisher will collect all these messages and publish them in book form. But I cannot resist the temptation of culling two passages from his message to the students given after hearing of two years' rigorous imprisonment awarded to Professor Jitendralal

Banerjee. The first is a striking quotation from Jiten Babu's own vigorous statement before the court. Here it is:

> If it is a sin to have demanded liberty for my countrymen with full and passionate intensity of soul, then I have sinned grievously, sinned beyond pardon or penitence and I rejoice that I have so sinned. If it is an offence to have asked my people to shake off the fetters of foreign servitude that degrades and dwarfs our humanity, then I am one of the most offending souls alive, and I rejoice that God gave me the courage and hardihood to commit such an offence. And as the All-merciful gave me courage and strength in the past to speak out the truth that is within me, so I hope that He will give me endurance in the future to go through the agony of man's unrighteous persecution.

And here are the closing paragraphs of Deshbandhu's appeal:

> What is Jitendralal Banerjee? I ask the students of Calcutta to realize the truth of his life. Words cannot convey it. The work that he did, the life which he lived, the qualities of his head and heart, all culminating in the grand sacrifice which he had the courage to make—these are more eloquent than any words that I can employ.
>
> I ask again, what is Jitendralal Banerjee? I wish with all the craving of my heart the students of Calcutta knew how to answer this question. He had given his life for the well-being of his dear devoted students. Are there none now to tell us the meaning of his sacrifice not by speaking angry words, nor by shedding idle tears but by taking up the cause he loved so well and by strengthening that cause by their own sacrifice?
>
> Merely existing is not living. I wish I could say students of Calcutta were living as men should live, as Jitendralal Banerjee lived. Now that his body is imprisoned, is there no one amongst the students of Calcutta who has the heart to hear the call of his soul?

Let no one underrate the importance of these appeals as mere emotion. Let no one belittle or scoff henceforth at Bengal's emotion. Bengal has moved out to the call of the country in a manner not expected even by me with all my staunch faith in Bengal. All the response that is being made is not confined to Calcutta merely, nor to Chittagong but to every place in Bengal where repression has gone. It is not froth. One does not undergo suffering by empty appeals or empty emotionalism. Bengal has proved the solidity of her emotion.

AN INSISTENT MESSAGE

Max Muller has somewhere written that truth must be repeated till it has gone home even as we are all enjoined to repeat not vainly but deliberately the name of God till we realize Him.

ıe Sikh Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee which seems to possess most efficient publicity bureau, has sent the second message of ırdar Khadak Singh from his imprisonment. It is almost a verbal petition of the first. The Sardar Saheb tells the *Khalsa* that ery Sikh should wear khadi, take simple food. Non-violence is e key to success. He further expects that all members of the cali *jathas*[1] in particular and the Sikh public in general shall at .ce give up the use of tea. What the Sardar Saheb says is but o true. High thinking is not possible without simple living. If : are to identify ourselves with the masses, we have to live as nply as is consistent with health. There can be no other cloth r us but khadi. A simple life conduces to non-violence. I have ıt been able to understand the Sardar's insistence on the abstiınce from tea. Whether tea has grown on the Sikhs more than ıy other drink, I do not know. I should have expected an exhortion to give up intoxicants of all kinds. But perhaps some Sikh ends will explain the stress laid on the disuse of tea.

Charkha in the Madras Council

The spinning-wheel was the subject of a debate in the Madras ›uncil when one of the members introduced a resolution recomınding that the Government should introduce improved patterns spinning-wheels and stimulate hand-spinning and hand-weaving. ıe resolution was thrown out after a full discussion, 23 members ting in its favour. The arguments that were advanced against e resolution were that "khadi was nothing better than gunny .d that no man of common sense would prefer it to cheap ill-made cloth," that "in this age of machinery, it would be iminal to go back to hand-spinning," that "hand-spun yarn was :ak," and lastly, that "the spinning-wheel had been found to be ›nomically unsound and that therefore public money ought not be spent on it". All these arguments were sufficiently met by e advocates of the wheel in the Council. But the point of interest ıs that the doctrine of economic unsoundness of the wheel, enunıted by the Minister in charge of the Department in question, ıs opposed by the economics expert of the Madras Government, . Slater, who appealed to the Minister "to keep an open mind" the matter. Dr. Slater appreciates the fact that the ag[illegible] India who are growing poorer need some such sup[illegible] cupation as spinning. But his expert opinion was [illegible] the prejudiced majority of the Council who would not [illegible]

[1] Bands of Akali Sikhs

facts, who do not know that the Madras Presidency to the present day manufactures very fine hand-spun khadi. They have not taken the trouble to learn that even a scientist like Dr. Ray[1], who passed all his life in making minute researches and promoting big companies, has become a convert to the charkha. Is it any wonder that ladies and gentlemen of station who know the message of the spinning-wheel find it necessary to hawk khadi in order to popularize its use?

Young India, 22-12-1921

37. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[*December 22, 1921*][2]

CHI. MAHADEV,

I shall certainly try to write to you regularly. Khwaja has been arrested. His wife writes to say that she will continue his work.[3]

I am sending you the draft of the resolution as I think it ought to run. Please go through it carefully and offer your suggestions if you have any. It is useless to send a telegram because telegrams are not delivered. Some of them, no doubt, they do deliver.

I want you to send Devdas to jail immediately. You will understand the significance of this.

I found the English of Swarupрani's message excellent.

Take care of your health. I go over what Kristodas[4] sends. It will not matter if you print off what I have revised without looking into it further.

Today's *Young India* also can fill half of your *Independent*. We have not been getting *Independent* for the last two days.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original : S.N. 11426

[1] Dr. (Sir) P. C. Ray (1861-1944); scientist and patriot

[2] The letter from Khwaja's wife mentioned by Gandhiji was quoted by him in *Young India* of December 22, 1921, the issue referred to in the last paragraph as "today's *Young India*".

[3] *Vide* 'Notes", 22-12-1921, under the sub-title "A Worthy Wife".

[4] Krishnadas, Gandhiji's secretary

38. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI[1]

Friday [On or before *December 23, 1921*]

BHAISHRI MAHADEV,

I read your letter. There is no end to your joy as there is none to your "grief". One can look at the matter as one wishes. May you remain firm in your resolve.

You may stay on there or . . . as long as you feel that your presence is necessary. You have many obligations to your family to be discharged and have got to repay them.

It is not clear to me whether or not you should take the responsibility of seeing your sisters married. If I were in your place I would make the position clear with my father. And if it was left to me to arrange their marriage, I would depend upon Him Who gave away the customary presents on behalf of Narasinh Mehta[2] to his daughter's in-laws at the time of her first pregnancy, and would send my sister to her father-in-law's with only a garland of yarn round her neck. This is my advice. You should discuss things with Durga[3] . . . and if she is in mourning, . . . to . . . father and seek his advice. After doing all this, you should follow the dictates of your conscience. If you give away everything, it will not matter; and if you do not give anything, I shall defend you before the whole world. What I said yesterday was the outpouring of my soul. I alone have to be carried away in its current. Others have not to. If, on their seeing the current that is carrying me, a similar current begins to flow in them, they may let themselves be carried away by it. The thing simply cannot be done on the advice of others. The reply Mathuradas gave was correct. He who wants to give away everything will do so of his own accord.

Yes, you are right in consulting me. I would give you the advice that I have given above. What is necessary is that we should learn to be more and more self-confident.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati original : S.N. 8763

[1] Presumably written before the addressee's incarceration on December 24, 1921, for his father died in 1923 and one of his sisters was married in 1922. The source is damaged in places.

[2] 1414-79; saint-poet of Gujarat and devotee of Shri Krishna

[3] Wife of Mahadev Desai

39. INTERVIEW TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

[December 23, 1921][1]

The Working Committee sat both this morning and evening and exhaustively discussed the main resolution dealing with the Congress programme and the future work. Among other matters considered was the selection of the president to act for Mr. Das and, as had already been suggested, Hakim Ajmal Khan was selected for the office. His name will be submitted to the All-India Congress Committee for confirmation at its tomorrow's sitting.

Mahatma Gandhi interviewed by a representative of *The Bombay Chronicle* after the meeting was over said that the meeting was noted for absolute harmony and complete unanimity of opinion among those who took part. Besides the members of the Committee, there were leading representatives of the provinces and others specially invited. There is considerable feeling among Karnatak, Maharashtra and one or two other provinces that foreign propaganda, which was dropped last year,[2] should be resumed and carried out on completely new lines so as to present the outside world with impartial information reagrding India's position. It is understood that a resolution in this behalf will be brought forward at the Subjects Committee meeting. It appears that Gandhiji is not in favour of such propaganda, but the outcome of the discussion will be awaited with interest. With reference to the Viceroy's speech[3] Gandhiji was not apparently disappointed since he himself had previously anticipated that result. The speech had merely justified his own view regarding the futility of such deputation. It was by mere accident, said Gandhiji, that he had seen the report of Lord Ronaldshay's speech and had thought that it should be answered. He had already replied[4] to it and nothing he had said was not justified by result. . . .

The Bombay Chronicle, 24-12-1921

[1] *Vide* "Telegram to Jiaram Saxena", on or after 16-12-1921.

[2] *Vide* Vol. XIX, p. 182.

[3] Delivered at Calcutta on December 21, 1921 in reply to the deputation led by Malaviya

[4] *Vide* "Interview to Associated Press on Round Table Conference", 20-12-1921.

40. TELEGRAM TO JAMNADAS DWARKADAS AND H. N. KUNZRU[1]

[On or after *December 23, 1921*]

AM STILL PREPARED ATTEND ANY CONFERENCE UNCONDITIONALLY. DO YOU NOT SEE WHEN OFFENSIVE NOTIFICATIONS WITHDRAWN AND PRISONERS DISCHARGED THERE IS NO ACTIVITY LEFT TO BE STOPPED? CAN YOU POINT ONE? BUT I AM, AS INDIVIDUAL, WILLING ATTEND IN SPITE NON-WITHDRAWAL NOTIFICATIONS AND NON-CO-OPERATORS CONTINUED DEFENSIVE. WISH YOU COULD REALIZE DEPUTATION PUT ON WRONG SCENT.

From a photostat: S.N. 7730

[1] Sent in reply to a telegram sent by the addressees from Calcutta on December 22, 1921, which was received by Gandhiji on December 23. The following are some excerpts from the telegram: "Read with profound regret your telegram to Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya which shattered all hope of amicable settlement . . . Your assurance you would make no conditions precedent to joining conference . . . made us confident you would not reject proposal that pending conference there should be suspension activity on either side . . . . Viceroy's speech although one may not agree wholly with it, very conciliatory in tone and temper. He asked only for a temporary truce . . . Conference can still take place if neither side would insist on the other acknowledging itself to be in the wrong as a necessary preliminary . . . Earnestly request you reconsider matter . . . We understand Bengal is in favour adoption such a course. Please revise decision and bring peace to country. Terms refer composition, etc., we believe can be settled easily if indispensable prelim condition accepted . . . You think Government particularly unjustified Criminal Law Amendment Act and Seditious Meetings Act whic promised to repeal . . . As matter fact Government refused Amendment Act Part Two in view existing situation a to repeal Seditious Meetings Act in order see wheth better atmosphere would prevail country . . . "

41. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS ON VICEROY'S SPEECH

AHMEDABAD,
December 24, 1921

Interviewed by an Associated Press correspondent, Mr. Gandhi made the following statement regarding His Excellency Lord Reading's speech[1] at Calcutta in reply to the deputation led by Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya :

I must confess that I have read the Viceregal utterance with deep pain. I was totally unprepared for what I must respectfully call his mischievous misrepresentation of the attitude of the Congress and the Khilafat organization in connection with the visit of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. Every resolution passed by either organization and every speaker has laid the greatest stress upon the fact that there was no question of showing the slightest ill will against the Prince or exposing him to any affront. The boycott was purely a question of principle and directed against what we have held to be the unscrupulous methods of the bureaucracy. I have always held, as I hold even now, that the Prince has been brought to India in order to strengthen the hold of the civil service corporation which has brought India into a state of abject pauperism and political serfdom. If I am proved to be wrong in my supposition that the visit has that sinister meaning I shall gladly apologize.

It is equally unfortunate for the Viceroy to say that the boycott of the welcome means an affront to the British people. His Excellency does not realize what a grievous wrong he is doing to his own people by confusing them with the British administrators in India. Does he wish India to infer that the British administrators here represent the British people and that the agitation directed against their methods is an agitation against the British people? And if such is the Viceregal contention and if to conduct

[1] Delivered on December 21, 1921, in which Lord Reading had, according to *India in 1921-22*, "fully explained the reasons which led Government to enforce special Acts; emphasized his determination to protect law-abiding subjects, and, further, in view of the approaching visit of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, conveyed grave warning as to the effect likely to be produced on the public and Parliament of the United Kingdom by affronts offered to the Heir to the Throne. His Excellency insisted also as a condition precedent even to the discussion of any project of a conference, on the imperative necessity for the discontinuance of the unlawful activities of the non-co-operation party."

a vigorous and effective agitation against the methods of the bureaucracy and to describe them in their true colours is an affront to the British people, then, I am afraid, I must plead guilty. But, then, I must also say in all humility that the Viceroy has entirely misread and misunderstood the great national awakening that is taking place in India. I repeat for the thousandth time that it is not hostile to any nation or any body of men, but it is deliberately aimed at the system under which the Government of India is being today conducted and I promise that no threats and no enforcement of threats by the Viceroy or any body of men will strangle that agitation or send to rest that awakening.

I have said in my reply[1] to Lord Ronaldshay's speech that we have not taken the offensive. We are not the aggressors. We have not got to stop any single activity. It is the Government that is to stop its aggravatingly offensive activity aimed, not at violence, but at lawful, disciplined, stern, but absolutely non-violent, agitation. It is for the Government of India and for it alone to bring about a peaceful atmosphere if it so desires. It has hurled a bombshell in the midst of material rendered inflammable by its own action and wonders that the material is still not inflammable enough to explode.

The immediate issue is not now the redress of the three wrongs[1]. The immediate issue is the right of holding public meetings and the right of forming associations for peaceful purposes, and in vindicating this right, we are fighting the battle not merely on behalf of non-co-operators, but we are fighting the battle for all India down from the peasant up to the prince and for all schools of politics. It is the one condition of any organic growth and I see in the Viceregal announcement an insistence on submission to a contrary doctrine, which an erstwhile exponent of the law of liberty has seen fit to lay down upon finding himself in an atmosphere where there is little regard for law and order on the part of those very men who are supposed to be the custodians of law and order. I have only to point to the unprovoked assaults being committed not in isolated cases, not in one place, but in Bengal, in the Punjab, in Delhi and in the United Provinces. I have no doubt that as repression goes on in its mad career the reign of terrorism will overtake the whole of this unhappy land. But, whether the campaign is conducted on civilized or unciviliz-

[1] *Vide* "Interview to Associated Press on Round Table Conference", 20-12-1921.

[2] Of the Khilafat, of the Punjab and of the denial of swaraj; *vide* "Notes", 22-12-1921, under the sub-title "Round Table Conference".

ed lines, so far as I can see, there is only one way open to non-co-operators—indeed, I contend, even to the people of India. On this question of the right of holding public meetings and forming associations there can be no yielding. We have burnt our boats and we must march onward till that primary right of human beings is vindicated.

Let me make my own position clear. I am most anxious for a settlement. I want a round table conference. I want our position to be clearly known by everybody who wants to understand it. I impose no conditions, but when conditions are imposed upon me prior to the holding of a conference, I must be allowed to examine those conditions and, if I find that they are suicidal, I must be excused if I do not accept them. The amount of tension that is created can be regulated solely by the Government of India, for the offensive has been taken by that Government.

The Leader, 26-12-1921

42. *TELEGRAM TO DEVDAS GANDHI*

[On or after *December 24, 1921*][1]

SIMPLY DELIGHTED ABOUT MAHADEV. HOPE DURGA IS STRONG AND WELL. SHE MAY RETURN IF SHE WISHES. HOPE YOU ARE CONTINUING THE PAPER TILL ARREST AND OTHERS READY TAKE YOUR PLACE.

BAPU

The Bombay Chronicle, 3-1-1922

43. *MY NOTES*

GOOD INTENTION PUNISHED

I have discovered through long experience that editing a journal is no light task. An editor should, in the first place, accept responsibility for his own lapses. Next, he is held responsible for anything which even his assistant may write, as also for the errors of reporters or other contributors. If a compositor makes a slip,

[1] This telegram was evidently sent soon after the conviction of Mahadev Desai on December 24, 1921, under the Criminal Law Amendment Act for publishing the manuscript edition of *Independent*.

then again the responsibility is the editor's; even if it is a proof-reader who has slipped, the editor has to face the music. If the machine fails and the copy misses the post or the types do not come out clearly, the editor will have to answer for the lapse. He cannot just write and leave everything else to others. I can cite incidents of all these types. The latest one, however, is such as will make the reader smile. It has led to a serious misunderstanding on the part of a friend. In *Navajivan's* issue of December 11, there was a note[1] about Parsis which contained the following sentence: "At any rate I assure my Parsi brothers and sisters that hundreds of Hindus and Muslims are ready to lay down their lives for them and for other communities except the Christians." As originally written, the words were *vi.*[2] *nani*[3]. What I meant was: "that hundreds of Hindus and Muslims are ready to lay down their lives for them and for other small communities like the Christians". The point after *vi.* having been left out, the result was another case of "[*Kaka*] *Ajmer gaya*"[4] becoming "[*Kaka*] *aaj mari gaya*."[5] A Christian friend read the sentence wrong and has protested to me. My other writings on this subject and the construction of the sentence leave no room for misunderstanding its purport. One should not be surprised, however, if a person not familiar with *Navajivan* happened to read only this passage and were to misconstrue it as above. One of my aims in writing this paragraph is to apologize to this Christian friend and others who may have misread the sentence. Another is to request all readers to take a lesson from the error in this case, that, even when an unfavourable construction may seem justified, a favourable construction should be accepted if the statement will bear it. My third aim is to plead for some sympathy for the editor. Realizing that the editor cannot possibly look after everything, readers should excuse unavoidable errors in the paper published under his name. I do not, however, say all this to secure a licence for mistakes. The editor is bound to discharge properly the responsibility which has come upon him, or leave the job. No one is forced to accept the editorship. If the printers, the compositors and the proof-readers are not all of them efficient, the editor alone is to be held responsible. Why did he, in such circumstances, accept the edi-

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXI, p. 566.

[2] Abbreviation for "and others"

[3] Small. *Vinani*, read as one word, means "except".

[4] Uncle went to Ajmer

[5] Uncle died today

torship? This, however, is only an ideal. If anyone decides not to start at all unless he can realize the ideal right now, he will never realize it. The reader, therefore, may certainly regard himself as a whip with which to punish the editor. Only, he should exercise discrimination in using the whip. One person may use it like Dyer and another may, like the large-hearted king, keep one for show and only on rare occasions let a restive horse know, when its misbehaviour is marked, that it is not entirely for show.

VISIT TO NEHRUJI IN JAIL

A letter received from an Ashram inmate who recently visited Pandit Motilal Nehru in Lucknow Jail is so good, most of it, that I reproduce it below:[1]

RESIDENTS OF RAJKOT

How can I help being pained when anyone criticizes Rajkot? A sister told me a few days ago that, if I went there now, I would see nothing but khadi everywhere and that I would see very few people wearing foreign cloth. The lady lives in Rajkot at present and generally wears khadi outside her home. From her own practice, she seems to have assumed that everyone in Rajkot wears khadi. But a young man, who observes the vow of complete swadeshi, is a resident of Rajkot and has not travelled much, has this to say about the city:[2]

This is no mild stricture. I found it confirmed, by chance, in what was said by another friend from Kathiawar who is a shrewd observer. If we discount the element of exaggeration which the criticism may possibly contain, the rest of it is likely to be based on facts. Kathiawar contributed handsomely to the Tilak Swaraj Fund. Amreli has an excellent arrangement for khadi work. Kathiawar produces a good quantity of khadi. I know all this. It is painful to know, however, that Kathiawaris living in big cities have not been able to give up their love of foreign cloth. Kathiawar should have been less infected by so-called progress. Its rocky soil should produce hardy, straightforward, brave, simple-minded and generous people. If, instead, we find love of pleasure increasing in its cities, what will come out of the high hopes which have been raised on its behalf? If Kathiawar does not make its full contribution to the *swaraj-yajna*, I, for one, feel that it should sever its connection with the rest of the country. I have been

[1] The letter is not translated here.

[2] The extract is not translated here. The correspondent had said that Rajkot had made no progress in the field of swadeshi.

hoping that, when the time for courting imprisonment comes, Kathiawaris will provide their quota of volunteers. If, however, we have not by then cultivated sufficient simplicity to wear khadi, how shall we be able to endure the austerity of jail life? When Deshbandhu Das wears khadi and plies the spinning-wheel, when Maulana Shaukat Ali, for whom it was difficult to adopt khadi, has started wearing it and works on the spinning-wheel in jail, should the residents of Kathiawar's cities keep away from khadi? I can now understand the reason for the complaint once made to me, to the effect that Kathiawar produces a good quantity of khadi but that the demand for it is not much. Will a time also come when the robust women of Kathiawar will indeed make *rotlas*[1] of *bajra*[2] and, in the early morning, churn liquid curds to obtain rich butter from them, but will give the *rotlas* to dogs and, their stomach too weak to digest butter, have some tea and biscuits, eat *fulkas*[3] made from mill-flour obtained from Bombay because the Kathiawar wheat is too heavy for their digestion and too red in colour to please them? If someone, following Green, were to write a history of the rise and decline of our people, omitting the wars of kings, he would certainly be able to prove that as India took more and more to fine cloth, soft to the touch, the people also became increasingly weaker in constitution and lost their spirit. Will a *Rabari*[4] woman of Kathiawar, six-foot tall, wear a *bhatigar*[5] sari of Japanese muslin if somebody gave her one? And will she go out grazing her cattle dressed in such a sari? We have taken a wrong path altogether. Giving up cultivation of inward beauty, we fell under the spell of outward adornment and lost the country, forsook our traditional ways, sacrificed our health and, as for the *atman*, sent it to sleep.

Will the young men of Kathiawar give up talking and start working? Will the women of Kathiawar follow the example of Shrimati Vasantidevi and go round selling khadi? Will the people of Kathiawar hear our *Dhed*[6] and *Bhangi*[7] brothers crying for justice? People who consider themselves polluted by their touch will never go to jail, they are not fit to do so.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 25-12-1921

[1] Thick, round cakes of unleavened bread
[2] A variety of millet
[3] Thin, light cakes of unleavened bread
[4] A community in Gujarat tending cows
[5] Multicoloured
[6] & [7] Communities traditionally regarded as untouchable

44. SPEECH AT SUBJECTS COMMITTEE MEETING, AHMEDABAD

December 25, 1921

The All-India Congress Committee met this morning and was engaged the whole day in a prolonged discussion of the main resolution moved by Mr. Gandhi regarding organization of volunteers, extension of civil disobedience, investing Gandhi or his successors with the full authority of the All-India Congress Committee to act in its name in case of emergency. . . .

Before the debate, the President Hakim Ajmal Khan was flooded with amendments from all sides. Hasrat Mohani[1], the President elect of the All-India Moslem League, persistently led the opposition demanding the deletion of those phrases in the resolution which excluded the possibility of resort to violence, or even the thought of it, so long as the pledge was in force. . . on the ground that his religion allowed him to take to violence in case non-violence failed.

The debate revealed difference of opinion on this point among Mahommedan members themselves. Some expressed the opinion that the adoption of Maulana Hasarat's amendments would be a change in the Congress Creed itself. . . .

In moving his resolution in the morning Mr. Gandhi made a long speech announcing that he had agreed to slight additions or alterations in his original resolution as the result of a conference last evening with the leaders of the Maharashtra party who, whilst loyally accepting the programme of non-co-operation in all its details, had made no secret of their dissatisfaction with some of its items. He assured all that, while there was little of surrender of the main principle in those modifications, they could be sure of the hearty, willing and believing co-operation of the party which was unrivalled in its strength and sacrifice and which had traditions behind it of great services and filled India with an indomitable spirit of democracy. The great leader of that party, who became an All-India leader and who found a lodgment in the hearts of millions of his countrymen, died developing that spirit of democracy.

Proceeding, Mr. Gandhi pointed out that this party had desired the introduction into the resolution of a provision offering shelter against mischievous insult to those lawyers, teachers and others who, though quite as patriotic and honest as any non-co-operator pretended to be, had not found their way to make sacrifices in the particular form demanded by the Congress. But while he objected to the insertion of such provision, as it would lead to dangerous interpretation, he emphatically declared that they must fully respect

[1] 1875-1951; Nationalist Muslim leader

all such people who, though considered weak from the non-co-operator's standpoint, were patriots every inch of them. He would not criticize lawyers in a carping spirit because it was the lawyers who had rendered signal services to the country when everyone else was shivering with fear.

He continued :

I ask everyone of you to go away with the spirit of goodwill towards Moderates, lawyers, schoolmasters, Government servants and C.I.D.s[1]. The Moderates are our countrymen, they are rallying round us today and when they find that the liberty of the country is really at stake, they are giving full expression to their views. It does one's soul good to read the leading articles in *The Leader* and the *Bengalee* and, after all, are we going to wash away the services of Sir Surendranath Banerjea[2]? I cannot possibly help shedding a tear when anything is said disparagingly of him. I urge upon this Committee to understand the admirable spirit in which the Maharashtra party has pleaded for toleration for those who do not see eye to eye with us. I am perfectly sure that when the time comes for sacrifice, Maharashtra will not be behind Bengal, or rather it is likely to come at the top.

Mr. Gandhi then expressed the hope that after his explanation, the provision proposed by the Maharashtra party would not be pressed because he wanted that the spirit which actuated it should be fully assimilated by all non-co-operators.

Concluding, Mr. Gandhi emphasized the programme and said:

Either we step into the new year with a full belief in this programme and finish it with lightning speed or we dissolve this compact of non-violence. So it is a fight to the finish with the Government in our own special manner. My belief in non-violence is so great that, if the country can only assimilate the mental attitude needed for the practice of real non-violence, we can promise swaraj in form and substance even before the end of this month.

The Hindu, 26-12-1921

[1] Members of the Government's Criminal Investigation Department

[2] 1848-1925; President of the Congress in 1895 and 1902; later, one of the leaders of the Moderate Party

45. *SPEECHES AT SUBJECTS COMMITTEE MEETING, AHMEDABAD*

December 27, 1921

After four hours' sitting this morning, the All-India Congress Committee came to definite decisions on the most momentous issues. It not only adopted by a very overwhelming majority Mr. Gandhi's central resolution,[1] but also defeated a formidable opposition of 52 members led by Hasrat Mohani who fought for a change in the Congress Creed in order to definitely lay down the attainment of swaraj without the British Empire as the object of the Congress . . . .

In opening the meeting, the President, Hakim Ajmal Khan, announced that he had received notices of amendments to Mr. Gandhi's resolution, which in their real meaning came into conflict with the Congress Creed itself. He, therefore, ruled them out of order, but suggested that if the movers so desired they could bring them forward as substantive propositions.

As the position looked somewhat confused, Mr. Gandhi made a short speech in course of which he analysed the contending issues and placed them clearly before the House. He said that if Hasrat Mohani and others desired, they could move separate resolutions urging change in the Congress Creed, but, as his resolution was then before the House, he wanted all to remember that those who thought like Hasrat Mohani should not vote for his (Gandhi's) resolution, because the very basis of his motion was that the present Creed must remain intact and that non-violence alone should be the weapon to fight their battle to the end. The Hasrat Mohani party, on the other hand, he said, stood for complete independence and fighting the battle by all possible means. The issue was plain and he desired that those who did not want a change in the existing Creed should vote at least for the spirit underlying his resolution, remembering that, if later on they voted for the resolution of Hasrat Mohani, they would nullify Mr. Gandhi's resolution.

The speech over, Mr. Gandhi's resolution was put to vote and carried amidst acclamation, only 10 voting against.

Hasrat Mohani then moved his first amendment to the Creed, proposing the attainment of swaraj by all possible and proper means in place of peaceful and legitimate means.

This amendment did not get any appreciable support and the mover thereupon withdrew it.

His next amendment declaring swaraj without the British Empire proved to be the main bone of contention.

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Congress Session, Ahmedabad–I", 28-12-1921.

He was supported by a dozen members . . .

An equal number of speakers opposed the amendment. . . .

Mr. Gandhi then made a short speech. He said he wanted to make it clear that today his hope of getting redress of Punjab and Khilafat through the British Government was ever so much greater than it was at any time 15 months ago. Within the Congress Creed there was still a chance for two parties who wanted swaraj within or without the British Empire, but there could be no room for those who wanted to resort to violence, because the moment anyone joined the Congress, he must sign a pledge of non-violence in terms of the Creed. Mr. Gandhi emphasized that the attainment of swaraj would by itself break imperialism. India even then would be certainly free. Concluding, he warned all against estranging from them the Moderates and others who were sympathizing with them, by taking steps which make the present easy task one of great difficult tasks.

Before the amendment of Mohani was put to vote all the visitors were asked to leave . . . it was rejected by a great majority, only 52 voting for it. . . .

The Hindu, 28-12-1921

46. *SPEECH AT SUBJECTS COMMITTEE MEETING, AHMEDABAD*

December 28, 1921

The Subjects Committee had its final sitting today and before adjourning rejected by an overwhelming majority Pandit Malaviya's proposition urging the Congress to declare its desire for a round table conference on reasonable terms and to delete from yesterday's main resolution that clause which advised aggressive civil disobedience.

The committee met at eight in the morning . . . Hakim Ajmal Khan could not come . . . .

Mr. Gandhi was thereupon voted to the chair.

In opening the proceedings Mr. Gandhi informed the house that the Madras members including Messrs Vijayaraghavachariar, Kasturi Ranga Iyengar[1] and Satyamurti had been pressing upon him the desirability of the passing of a resolution in reply to the Viceroy's Calcutta speech, emphatically pronouncing on the part of the Congress that the destinies of India were not in the hands of the British Parliament but in the hands of the Congress and that the British Parliament could merely ratify the wishes of the people of India. On the other hand, he said Pandit Malaviya and Mr. Jinnah were pressing that the Congress

[1] Journalist and Congress leader of Madras

should definitely state its position with regard to the suggestion for a round table conference.

Mr. Gandhi left it to the committee to adopt motions on the lines suggested by the two parties for he had not himself been able to draft resolutions which could meet their wishes. He said telegrams had passed between him, Pandit Malaviya, Mr. Das, Maulana Abul Kalam and Mr. Shyam Sunder Chakravarty on the subject of a round table conference. He had agreed with Messrs Das and Chakravarty to waive the hartal on the 24th of this month provided the notifications regarding the disbandment of volunteers and the prohibition of public meetings were withdrawn, and the prisoners undergoing imprisonment as a result of these notifications released. Mr. Gandhi said that he went a step further in his demand and wanted the *fatwa* prisoners, including the Karachi prisoners, also to be released because it was from the time of the Karachi trial that Government went mad. He added he did not want protection for those who had committed violence. To another telegram from Mr. Chakravarty saying that on certain conditions Calcutta opinion favoured a round table conference, Mr. Gandhi had replied that either the conference should take place unconditionally, Government doing whatever it liked and non-co-operators doing whatever they chose, or, if a truce was essential then it was necessary that the terms and the composition of the conference were previously decided and the prisoners including the Karachi prisoners discharged and the objectionable notifications withdrawn unconditionally.

Continuing, Mr. Gandhi said he wanted to make his position quite clear.

Personally, I have not attached the slightest importance to the question of a conference. I think that it will be inconsistent with the dignity of the Congress to pass a resolution about the conference when there is nothing in the Viceregal pronouncement to show that the Congress is called upon to make any response. On the other hand there is nothing in the main resolution, which I hope you will pass today unanimously in the Congress *pandal*, which bangs the door in the face of the Viceroy or anybody who wants a round table conference, but there is in that resolution something which is extremely dignifying, namely, that if they want a round table conference that can only be had if we have certain indications of a change of heart, that we will really have a successful result from the conference. It will go hard with us if we go to a conference and come away from it with absolutely empty hands, but I assure you I find nothing in the Viceregal pronouncement that inspires me with confidence.

The Viceroy, he continued, had already declared his helplessness over the Punjab and the Khilafat and had presented the reforms in their face. Of course there was much in the view that when business men put their heads

together they were not going to come away with absolutely empty hands, but

I say it is not for the Congress to make any such declaration upon the flimsy ground and upon the mere hope of catching a straw. And who catches a straw except a man who is about to be drowned? But not the Congress which is pulsating with life today. (Prolonged applause.)

Concluding, Mr. Gandhi asked Pandit Malaviya whom he described amidst applause as the noblest Indian to state his point of view. . . .

The Leader, 30-12-1921

47. SPEECH AT CONGRESS SESSION, AHMEDABAD—I

December 28, 1921

As Mahatma Gandhi got down the platform to reach the rostrum in his usual loin-cloth, there was an enthusiastically devotional and deafening applause. Having taken his seat on the rostrum, he spoke in Hindi as under:

MR. PRESIDENT, BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

Hakimji Saheb[1] has allowed me 30 minutes and I hope to be able to keep within the limit prescribed. The President, however, missed to add that the time taken in reading the resolution in Hindi and in English would be excluded. (Laughter.)

Those of you who do not know English will kindly excuse me. Later on, I shall give the substance of this in Hindi.

He then read out the resolution in English rendering it in Hindi, paragraph by paragraph, as he proceeded:

> Whereas, since the holding of the last National Congress, the people of India have found from actual experience that, by reason of the adoption of non-violent non-co-operation, the country has made great advance in fearlessness, self-sacrifice and self-respect, and whereas the movement has greatly damaged the prestige of the Government, and whereas the country on the whole is rapidly progressing towards swaraj, this Congress confirms the resolution adopted at the special session of the Congress at Calcutta and reaffirmed at Nagpur, and places on record the fixed determination of the Congress to continue the programme of non-violent non-co-opera-

[1] Hakim Ajmal Khan



tion with greater vigour than hitherto, in such manner as each province may determine, till the Punjab and the Khilafat wrongs are redressed and swaraj is established, and the control of the Government of India passes into the hands of the people from that of an irresponsible corporation.

And whereas by reason of the threat uttered by His Excellency the Viceroy in his recent speeches and the consequent repression started by the Government of India in the various provinces by way of disbandment of Volunteer Corps and forcible prohibition of public and even committee meetings in an illegal and high-handed manner and by the arrest of many Congress workers in several provinces, and whereas this repression is manifestly intended to stifle all Congress and Khilafat activities and deprive the public of their assistance, this Congress resolves that all activities of the Congress be suspended as far as necessary and appeals to all, quietly and without any demonstration, to offer themselves for arrest by belonging to the volunteer organizations to be formed throughout the country in terms of the resolution of the Working Committee arrived at in Bombay on the 23rd day of November last, provided that no one shall be accepted as volunteer who does not sign the following pledge:

With God as witness, I solemnly declare that,

1. I wish to be a member of the National Volunteer Corps.

2. So long as I remain a member of the Corps, I shall remain non-violent in word and deed and shall earnestly endeavour to be non-violent in intent, since I believe that, as India is circumstanced, non-violence alone can help the Khilafat and the Punjab and result in the attainment of swaraj and consolidation of unity among all the races and communities of India whether Hindu, Mussulman, Sikh, Parsi, Christian or Jew.

3. I believe in and shall endeavour always to promote such unity.

4. I believe in swadeshi as essential for India's economic, political and moral salvation, and shall use hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar to the exclusion of every other cloth.

5. As a Hindu I believe in the justice and necessity of removing the evil of untouchability and shall, on all possible occasions, seek personal contact with and endeavour to render service to the submerged classes.

6. I shall carry out the instructions of my superior officers and all the regulations, not inconsistent with the spirit

of this pledge, prescribed by the Volunteer Board or the Working Committee or any other agency established by the Congress.

7. I am prepared to suffer imprisonment, assault or even death for the sake of my religion and my country without resentment.

8. In the event of my imprisonment, I shall not claim from the Congress any support for my family or dependents.

This Congress trusts that every person of the age of 18 and over will immediately join the volunteer organizations.

Notwithstanding the proclamations prohibiting public meetings, and inasmuch as even Committee meetings have been attempted to be construed as public meetings, this Congress advises the holding of Committee meetings and of public meetings, the latter in enclosed places and by tickets and by previous announcements, at which as far as possible only speakers, previously announced, shall deliver written speeches, care being taken in every case to avoid risk of provocation and possible violence by the public in consequence.

This Congress is further of opinion that civil disobedience is the only civilized and effective substitute for an armed rebellion, whenever every other remedy for preventing arbitrary, tyrannical and emasculating use of authority by individuals or coprorations has been tried, and, therefore, advises all Congress workers and others, who believe in peaceful methods and are convinced that there is no remedy save some kind of sacrifice to dislodge the existing Government from its position of perfect irresponsibility to the people of India, to organize individual civil disobedience and mass civil disobedience, when the mass of people have been sufficiently trained in the methods of non-violence and otherwise, in terms of the resolution thereon of the last meeting of the All-India Congress Committee held at Delhi.

This Congress is of opinion that in order to concentrate attention upon civil disobedience, whether mass or individual, whether of an offensive or defensive character, under proper safeguards and under instructions to be issued from time to time by the Working Committee or the Provincial Congress Committee concerned, all other Congress activities should be suspended whenever and wherever and to the extent to which it may be found necessary.

This Congress calls upon all students of the age of 18 and over, particularly those studying in the national institutions

and the staff thereof, immediately to sign the foregoing pledge and become members of National Volunteer Corps.

In view of the impending arrests of a large number of Congress workers, this Congress, whilst requiring the ordinary machinery to remain intact and to be utilized in the ordinary manner whenever feasible, hereby appoints until further instructions Mahatma Gandhi as the sole executive authority of the Congress and invests him with the full powers of the All-India Congress Committee including the power to convene a special session of the Congress or of the All-India Congress Committee or the Working Committee, such powers to be exercised between any two sessions of the All-India Congress Committee and also with the power to appoint a successor in emergency.

This Congress hereby confers upon the said successor and all subsequent successors appointed in turn by their predecessors all his aforesaid powers.

Provided that nothing in this resolution shall be deemed to authorize Mahatma Gandhi or any of the aforesaid successors to conclude any terms of peace with the Government of India or the British Government without the previous sanction of the All-India Congress Committee, to be finally ratified by the Congress specially convened for the purpose, and provided also that the present Creed of the Congress shall in no case be altered by Mahatma Gandhi or his successors, except with the leave of the Congress first obtained.

This Congress congratulates all those patriots who are now undergoing imprisonment for the sake of their conscience or country and realizes that their sacrifice has considerably hastened the advent of swaraj.[1]

It has taken me exactly 35 minutes to read the resolution in English and in Hindustani. I shall hope, if I can at all avoid it, not to take even the 30 minutes that Hakimji Saheb has allotted to me. And I do not propose, if I can help it, to take all that time because I feel that the resolution explains itself. If at the end of fifteen months' incessant activity, you, the delegates assembled in this Congress, do not know your own minds I am positive that I cannot possibly carry conviction to you even in a two hours'

[1] These paragraphs are from the *Report of the Thirty-sixth Indian National Congress*. Those following are from *Young India*, 19-1-1922, where they appear with the introductory note : "The following is the text, as revised by him, of Mr. Gandhi's speech at the Congress session, introducing the central resolution."

speech; and what is more, if I could carry conviction to you today because of my speech, I am afraid I would lose all faith in my countrymen because it would demonstrate their incapacity to observe things and events; it would demonstrate their incapacity to think coherently; because I submit, there is absolutely nothing new in this resolution that we have not been doing all this time, that we have not been thinking all this time. There is absolutely nothing new in this resolution which is at all startling. Those of you who have followed the proceedings from month to month of the Working Committee, of the All-India Congress Committee every three months, and have studied their resolutions, can but come to one conclusion, that this resolution is absolutely the natural result of the national activities during the past fifteen months; and if you have at all followed the course, the downward course, that the repressive policy of the Government has been taking, you can only come to the conclusion that the Subjects Committee has rightly come to this resolution; and that the only answer that a self-respecting nation can return to the Viceregal pronouncements and to the repression that is overtaking this land, is the course mapped out in this resolution.

I am not going to take the time of the English-knowing friends over the religious subtleties of the pledge that the volunteers have to take. I wish to confine my remarks in Hindustani to that subject. But I want this assembly to understand the bearing of this resolution. This resolution means that we have outgrown the stage of helplessness and dependence upon anybody; this resolution means that the nation through its representatives is determined to have its own way without the assistance of any single human being on earth and with the help of only God above.

This resolution, whilst it shows the indomitable courage and the determination of the nation to vindicate its rights and to be able to stare the world in the face, also says in all humility to the Government: "No matter what you do, no matter how you repress us, we shall one day wring reluctant repentance from you; and we ask you to think betimes, and take care what you are doing and see that you do not make 300 millions of India your eternal enemies."

This resolution, if the Government sincerely wants an open door, leaves the door wide open for it. If the Moderate friends wish to rally round the standard of the Khilafat, and round the standard of the liberties of the Punjab and, therefore, of India, then this resolution leaves the door wide open for them too. If this Gov-

ernment is sincerely anxious to do justice, if Lord Reading has really come to India to do justice and nothing less—and we want nothing more—then I inform him from this platform, with God as my witness, with all the earnestness that I can command, that he has got an open door in this resolution if he means well, but the door is closed in his face if he means ill, no matter how many people go to their graves, no matter what wild career this repression is to go through. There is every chance for him to hold a round table conference, but it must be a real conference. If he wants a conference at a table, where only equals are to sit and where there is not to be a single beggar, then there is an open door and that door will always remain open. There is nothing in this resolution which anyone who has modesty and humility need be ashamed of. This resolution is not an arrogant challenge to anybody but it is a challenge to authority that is enthroned on arrogance. It is a challenge to the authority which disregards the considered opinion of millions of thinking human beings. It is a humble and an irrevocable challenge to authority which in order to save itself wants to crush freedom of opinion and freedom of association—the two lungs that are absolutely necessary for a man to breathe the oxygen of liberty; and if there is any authority in this country that wants to curb the freedom of speech and freedom of association, I want to be able to say in your name, from this platform, that that authority will perish, unless it repents, before an India that is steeled with high courage, noble purpose and determination, even if everyone of the men and women who choose to call themselves Indians is blotted out of the earth. God only knows, if I could possibly have advised you before to go to the Round Table Conference, if I could possibly have advised you not to undertake this resolution of civil disobedience, I would have done so.

I am a man of peace. I believe in peace. But I do not want peace at any price. I do not want the peace that you find in stone; I do not want the peace that you find in the grave; but I do want that peace which you find embedded in the human breast, which is exposed to the arrows of a whole world but which is protected from all harm by the power of the Almighty God.[1]

Young India, 19-1-1922; also *Report of the Thirty-sixth Indian National Congress*

[1] After this, Gandhiji spoke in Hindi; for the text of his speech, *vide* the following item.

48. SPEECH AT CONGRESS SESSION, AHMEDABAD—II

[December 28, 1921][1]

SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

I shall not repeat to you what I have said in English. What I shall tell you, you already know and understand. Our problem is what to do about our Sikh brethren. I ask you to go on doing your work peaceably till the attainment of swaraj. You should be peaceful in thought and intent. While you maintain peace with the hand, you must also keep the tongue clean. Our speech so far has not always been clean. Those who would act peaceably ought to keep their speech also clean. If we want to retain the anger that is in our hearts, then I must tell you that it will be impossible to keep peace with the hand as well as the tongue. I will say to every man and woman, if they would do any work, that they should remember this in their conduct and proceed about their work after taking a vow [of peace], after clearing their hearts of anger. I must ask you, if you wish to see India free, to take such a pledge. If you fail in this, you will do harm to the work. Harm will come to the Hindus as well as to the Muslims.

The mad Hindu will say that Mussulmans destroyed the temple of Somnath; the mad Mussulman will talk in the same vein. He will think of the might of Afghanistan. If you choose to give up peace, there will be no peace. There will be peace only if we maintain it. We have to keep in mind also the situation that prevails in India. If you want that the Hindus, Mussulmans and Parsis should live in mutual love, you must take this pledge. It will not do to draw the sword. Those who are thus disposed will only follow the English. Then there is also this: we are prepared for imprisonment; we are prepared to put up with beatings; we are prepared even for death. Our religion tells us this. And what is the other condition? The other condition is that we should master our anger and put up with things. But if we merely tolerate without mastering our anger then it is not tolerating. When a man beat at Hazrat Ali the latter did not become angry. If he had become angry Islam would not be there today. It is a traditional way of ours. It is not laid down either in the *Granth Saheb*[2] or in

[1] From the *Report of the Thirty-sixth Indian National Congress*

[2] Holy book of the Sikhs

the Koran. Our religion tells us that if we act with patience, God will say, "Well done." We should not use the sword. It would be well if you should act in this way. If you wish to go and lay down your life, do so. Dying for India is not suicide. Suicide is bad both for Hindus as well as Mussulmans. Rather than violate a woman's chastity it is better for one to go and drown oneself. Suicide is bad but this type of suicide is good.[1] You have worked for fifteen months. You should continue working in this way. Have you or have you not benefited from peace? Is there or is there not something in non-co-operation? Swaraj is in self-control. Swaraj is not for the faint-hearted. Were Shaukat Ali here he would have said that we must all die for swaraj. It is not too great a price to pay for swaraj. If you want to work I say to you: "Lock yourself up in a room and seek guidance from God." If you cannot do this ask your hearts whether what I am telling you is not something important. If you feel it is not, then you may reject this resolution. If you feel it is, then respect it. And respecting it means acting on what is in it. Now what have you to say to this? If anyone goes against it, he will be creating great difficulties. You should work in the way I have suggested and peacefully secure swaraj and solve the Punjab and Khilafat questions.

[From Hindi]

Aaj, 2-1-1922

49. *SPEECH ON HASRAT MOHANI'S MOTION—I*[2]

AHMEDABAD,
December 28, 1921

MR. PRESIDENT, BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

It grieves me to see that we have among us delegates who thoughtlessly proclaim that they want this and they want that. It shows that we are not aware of the situation that confronts us. At the same time I feel happy that there are men who are not afraid of speaking out. The time was when the very mention of

[1] The *Aaj* report is obscure here. The last three sentences have been taken from *Report of the Thirty-sixth Indian National Congress*.

[2] Delivered at the Congress session in reply to Hasrat Mohani's motion which read : "The object of the Indian National Congress is the attainment of swaraj or complete independence, free from all foreign control, by the people of India, by all legitimate and peaceful means". Gandhiji spoke first in Hindi and then in English; for the latter speech *vide* the following item.

swaraj frightened us. But today we have the courage to say that we cannot stay in the British Empire and want complete independence. And I am convinced that we shall not be afraid to voice even bolder sentiments.

You heard the bomb-shell that Hasrat Mohani burst. He has placed before us but one thing : complete independence. His resolution contradicts the previous resolution; it is also contrary to the Creed of the Congress. We cannot do a tiny thing but want to think of a very big thing—this is the meaning of Hasrat Mohani's resolution. What is good in his resolution is already contained in the resolution of the Congress. Hasrat Saheb's resolution will frighten away many people. We have not even fully achieved Hindu-Muslim unity. And we want to talk of big things in advance of it. This will only hinder our progress. I hope you will reject Hasrat Saheb's motion.

[From Hindi]

Report of the Thirty-sixth Indian National Congress

50. SPEECH ON HASRAT MOHANI'S MOTION—II

December 28, 1921

The following is the revised speech delivered in opposition to Maulana Hasrat Mohani's proposition on independence :

FRIENDS,

I have said only a few words (in Hindi) in connection with the proposition of Mr. Hasrat Mohani. All I want to say to you in English is that the levity with which that proposition has been taken by some of you has grieved me. It has grieved me because it shows a lack of responsibility. As responsible men and women we should go back to the days of Nagpur and Calcutta and we should remember what we did only an hour ago. An hour ago we passed a resolution which actually contemplates a final settlement of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs and transference of the power from the hands of the bureaucracy into the hands of the people by certain definite means. Are you going to rub the whole of that position from your mind by raising a false issue and by throwing a bombshell in the midst of the Indian atmosphere? I hope that those of you who have voted for the previous resolution will think fifty times before taking up this resolution and voting for it. We shall be charged by the thinking portion of the world that we do not know really

where we are. Let us understand, too, our limitations. Let Hindus and Mussulmans have absolute, indissoluble unity. Who is here who can say today with confidence, "Yes, Hindu-Muslim unity has become an indissoluble factor of Indian nationalism?" Who is here who can tell me that the Parsis and the Sikhs and the Christians and the Jews and the untouchables about whom you heard this afternoon—who will tell me that those very people will not rise against any such idea? Think, therefore, fifty times before you take a step which will redound not to your credit, not to your advantage, but which may cause you irreparable injury. Let us first of all gather up our strength; let us first of all sound our own depths. Let us not go into waters whose depths we do not know, and this proposition of Mr. Hasrat Mohani lands you into depths unfathomable. I ask you in all confidence to reject that proposition, if you believe in the proposition that you passed only an hour ago. The proposition now before you rubs off the whole of the effect of the proposition that you passed only a moment ago. Are creeds such simple things like clothes which a man can change at will? For creeds people die and for creeds people live from age to age. Are you going to change the Creed which with all deliberation, and after great debate in Nagpur, you accepted? There was no limitation of one year when you accepted that Creed. It is an extensive Creed; it takes in all, the weakest and the strongest, and you will deny yourselves the privilege of clothing the weakest amongst yourselves with protection if you accept this limited Creed of Maulana Hasrat Mohani which does not admit the weakest of your brethren. I, therefore, ask you in all confidence to reject his proposition.

Young India, 19-1-1922

51. A MODEL PRISONER

Should non-co-operators shout *Vande Mataram*[1] inside jails against jail discipline which may excite ordinary prisoners to violence, should non-co-operators go on hunger strike for the improvement of food or other conveniences, should they strike work inside jails on hartal days and other days? Are non-co-operators entitled to break rules of jail discipline unless they affect their conscience?

Such is the text of a telegram I received from a non-co-operator friend in Calcutta. From another part of India when a

[1] The refrain of a patriotic song composed by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee

friend, again a non-co-operator, heard of the indiscipline of non-co-operator prisoners, he asked me to write on the necessity of observing jail discipline. As against this I know prisoners who are scrupulously observing in a becoming spirit all the discipline imposed upon them.

It is necessary, when thousands are going to jail, to understand exactly the position a non-co-operator prisoner can take up consistently with his pledge of non-violence. Non-co-operation, when its limitations are not recognized, becomes a licence instead of being a duty and, therefore, becomes a crime. The dividing line between right and wrong is often so thin as to become indistinguishable. But it is a line that is breakable and unmistakable.

What is then the difference between those who find themselves in jails for being in the right and those who are there for being in the wrong? Both wear often the same dress, eat the same food and are subject outwardly to the same discipline. But whilst the latter submit to discipline most unwillingly and would commit a breach of it secretly, and even openly if they could, the former will willingly and to the best of their ability conform to the jail discipline and prove worthier and more serviceable to their cause than when they are outside. We have observed that the most distinguished among the prisoners are of greater service inside the jails than outside. The coefficient of service is raised to the extent of the strictness with which jail discipline is observed.

Let it be remembered that we are not seeking to destroy jails as such. I fear that we shall have to maintain jails even under swaraj. It will go hard with us, if we let the real criminals understand that they will be set free or be very much better treated when swaraj is established. Even in reformatories by which I would like to replace every jail under swaraj, discipline will be exacted. Therefore, we really retard the advent of swaraj if we encourage indiscipline. Indeed the swift programme of swaraj has been conceived on the supposition that we being a cultured people are capable of evolving high discipline within a short time.

Indeed whilst on the one hand civil disobedience authorizes disobedience of unjust laws or unmoral laws of a state which one seeks to overthow, it requires meek and willing submission to the penalty of disobedience and, therefore, cheerful acceptance of the jail discipline and its attendant hardships.

It is now, therefore, clear that a civil resister's resistance ceases and his obedience is resumed as soon as he is under confinement. In confinement he claims no privileges because of the civility of his disobedience. Inside the jail by his exemplary conduct he reforms

even the criminals surrounding him, he softens the hearts of jailors and others in authority. Such meek behaviour springing from strength and knowledge ultimately dissolves the tyranny of the tyrant. It is for this reason that I claim that voluntary suffering is the quickest and the best remedy for the removal of abuses and injustices.

It is now manifest that shouts of *Bande Mataram* or any other in breach of jail discipline are unlawful for a non-co-operator to indulge in. It is equally unlawful for him to commit a stealthy breach of jail regulations. A non-co-operator will do nothing to demoralize his fellow prisoners. The only occasion when he can openly disobey jail regulations or hunger-strike is when an attempt is made to humiliate him or when the warders themselves break, as they often do, the rules for the comfort of prisoners, or when food that is unfit for human consumption is issued, as it often is. A case for civil disobedience also arises when there is interference with any obligatory religious practice.

Young India, 29-12-1921

52. *INTERVIEW WITH BENGAL DELEGATES*[1]

AHMEDABAD,
December 29, 1921

MAHATMAJI : What I suggest is that you ask me what you like.

A DELEGATE : The question is difficult. We like to know what would be the procedure of our work.

MAHATMAJI : The resolutions that we have passed may be summed up really in this manner that we want to answer the repression of the Government expressed in the two notifications about the disbandment of volunteers and the prohibition of public meetings. Therefore we meet them by simply enrolling all men and women as volunteers and we meet the notification prohibiting public meetings by holding public meetings and committee meetings whenever necessary and even when unnecessary. But there are two ways; one is by goading the Government to take action against us by holding public meetings even when it is unnecessary. But my advice is : Do not do that. That will become offensive, not in

[1] Published in the source as the "full text of the report of the Confer ence held on 29th December last at Ahmedabad" between Mahatma Gandhi and the Bengal delegates.

the offensive sense of the term, but as the opposite of defensive. We need not and we ought not to take the offensive till we have exhausted the defensive. Therefore, so long as you can go on with enrolment of volunteers and taking work from them in the ordinary course, and so long as you can go on with your public meetings that may be required for your purpose—for your propaganda—for instructing the people—you should go on ceaselessly. That by itself is bound to result in risks. Do not worry so long as you are doing your duty. Do not worry as to what is happening to prisoners. There are ways. Naturally one way of releasing prisoners is to go to jail; but our goal is not the release of prisoners, our goal is, the attainment of swaraj and getting the key of the jail in our possession. That is our goal. Therefore, if you can reach that goal by doing all the national work that you have been doing but in an honest spirit, ceaselessly, without waiting for a single minute, then I tell you that it is more and more blessed to be in jail than to be outside—that is from a selfish standpoint. I assume that you are all true and honest men, and I am sure that you are so; and if you are not—all of you—I want you to be so. Then you may depend upon it that without a single one courting imprisonment for the sake of it, we will attain swaraj.

And you have got, therefore, stiffer terms. You are to enrol men and women as volunteers; we have all to comply with those seven or eight pledges and the compliance with those is the automatic attainment of swaraj—absolutely real. If all the Indians sign those pledges and carry them to the letter, and in the spirit in which they are written, it is finished. You do not need to do anything more at all.

In spite of the non-violence that has been observed in Bengal to an enormous extent, I still doubt whether your minds are non-violent. And yet I would like you to remember what Mr. Das has said. He did not ask you to go to jail with him, but he has asked you to remain non-violent in thought, word and deed. How many of us are non-violent in thought, word and deed? But if he expects us today to go to jail, which he does, whether he says it or not—there is no doubt about it—he expects all of us to go to jail, but the condition precedent to our seeking imprisonment is, that we have become non-violent in thought, word and deed. That is really the first thing for us to do.

Do not take the offensive, but take up the defensive by signing the pledge—knowing its contents, and knowing its importance—or do not sign the pledge at all. If you have signed that pledge without knowing its full importance, withdraw your name. If you have any hesitation at all about belief in that pledge, on no

account I expect you to take up mass civil disobedience. You have to wait for me. The conception of civil disobedience is entirely mine, and I tell you it is not borrowed from anywhere else—the whole of the conception of civil disobedience is presented to you. The word is not mine. I am most anxious that such experiment of a world-wide importance should not be tried in an improper or unscientific manner, so that it may not be a failure. I want to guard ourselves against failure; I may fail myself but that is a different thing. But you will certainly be blamed and you will probably begin then to blame civil disobedience itself, when you have committed some atrocious blunder. Therefore, I say: Do not take up mass civil disobedience at all. Confine yourself to individual civil disobedience of a defensive character. A child even can take up that. So much in connection with one part of our programme of what is to be done.

In Bengal today I know that there is a great deal of impatience and, therefore, intolerance, and let me also tell you, you won't, I am sure, misunderstand me when I tell you that of all the places throughout India, I have not seen so much bitterness amongst ourselves as I have seen in Bengal, and therefore, so much intolerance. Take the two schools in Madras. There is Mr. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar representing really the moderate section of non-co-operators, and take the school that is led by Dr. Rajan[1]—but the relation between them is sweet. Then take the case of co-operators and non-co-operators. The relations between them are by no means so estranged as they are in Bengal. I had occasion to remark that in Barisal. I do not know if that suggestion was ever reproduced. But every word of what I said then wholly stands true today. We in our impatience have believed that we ourselves are paragons of perfection and that those who differ from us are not only not well-wishers of the country, but its enemies. And therefore, we consider that even our best leaders—take Mr. Surendranath Banerjea—have I not seen what is written in the papers about him and what I have heard in private conversation—we seem to think, that he is an enemy of the country. I do not think he is so, I tell you that he is not an enemy of the country. If I went to Madras and said that Mr. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar was an enemy of the country, they would have resented that statement—they would not have tolerated it. But I know that in Bengal you would have tolerated my saying that Mr. Surendranath Banerjea was an enemy of the country. Take

[1] Dr. T. S. S. Rajan; leading Congressmen, later Minister in Madras

the extreme section. Mr. Thiagaraya Chetty[1]—I am not prepared to say that he is an enemy of the country—though really he has now come to the surface of public life—was by no means of a hopeful character.

A DELEGATE: But the life of Sir Surendranath has never been of a hopeful character.

MAHATMAJI: So far as I know—he has to say so. Therefore, I would warn you, if you are to be true to your non-co-operation and non-violence, not to be so uncharitable and not to think so ill of our own countrymen. And after all, is it not a reflection upon ourselves? Somebody told me that it is the pride of Englishmen that they were able to say during the last Great War there was not a single Englishman [who was a] spy, whereas we consider that barring ourselves every other Indian is an enemy of the country. This of course represents the view of a school of pessimism. When we have got such elongated [*sic*] opinion of ourselves, we are committing national suicide.

I want to warn every Bengali friend who has come here that if he wants to release these prisoners full of hope, and with our own power, there are ways and ways of releasing them. The most natural way to release them before their time is by our own power. The second method is—they are released by efflux of time; and the third is, and this is so hopelessly weakening—that they are released after their time. But, when they come from prison, they will find a new India, not the India of their hope, but an India in which they cannot live possibly for two days together. But I cannot contemplate the possibility of the last condition. But the condition will become a serious probability if the spirit of intolerance continues to haunt us. So it is against the very spirit of non-co-operation. Non-co-operation is not a doctrine of despair. Non-co-operation is not a doctrine of hatred and hopelessness. It is a doctrine of love. But, I do not want you just now to think of the Government with which we are non-co-operating. I simply want you to stretch your charity to your own countrymen—whether they are Moderates, whether they are in Government employ, in the police or in the C.I.D.—whatever they are, I ask you to be charitable towards them. And if you can, we shall have infinitely greater power than we have today. And I cannot urge upon you this one thing with too much earnestness.

I wish I could reproduce the conversation I had with Moti Babu. Of course, I cannot describe to you in detail the conversa-

[1] Founder of the Justice Party in Madras

tion[1] I had with him when I visited him in Calcutta last about the lawyers and how he urged me not to be harsh upon them. I know I have said many unpleasant things that could be proved and that were proper and then, too, in no uncharitable spirit and certainly not with a view to estranging them from us. I was anxious that they should be dislodged from their leadership, or the sole leadership which they possessed.

But there never was the slightest intention that they should be branded out of public service. On the contrary, I endeavoured to harness every lawyer—even a practising lawyer—with national service,—but[2], if he cannot fulfil the conditions, he cannot very well work officially in Non-co-operation Committees and so on. But, the question undoubtedly arises that if lawyers may not do so—and that was the question which was hotly discussed at Nagpur—what about others who do not fulfil the terms, as for instance the merchants. This was pressed home by Mr. Kelkar and he once challenged me in a public meeting, and even suggested that I was partial to the merchants, which of course was wrong. But, as I said in my address, we expected more from the lawyers, because they were leaders. We expected less from the merchants, because they never aspired for leadership. We have taken their money and no more. Therefore, so much could not possibly be expected from the merchants. There is no question of dispute between lawyers and merchants. But that is one thing, and to say that lawyers should be hunted out of our circles is totally another—even if we do not remove from our midst merchants who do not fulfil the terms. If we have in our midst people who do not fulfil the terms, let us at least be charitable to the lawyers, and in a becoming manner, in a dignified manner, receive the benefit of their knowledge and of their service. So I would ask you to see whether you can get the assistance of every lawyer in the manner, in the limited manner, I have suggested. I do not want you to take lawyers as chairmen of your committees. I have no doubt that it will be dangerous because today the most important thing is fearlessness, bordering upon recklessness, and unless we are prepared to take the boldest risk consistent with the pledge of non-violence, we cannot possibly finish our programme within the limited time at our disposal. Therefore, I ask you to take service from the lawyers in every other department but in leadership, and for leadership, take an untouchable if he has got iron

[1] *Vide* Vol. XVIII, pp. 257-9.
[2] The source has 'because'.

courage, a brave heart, and if he is so reckless as to sacrifice all the things of the earth that are nearest and dearest to him, including his nearest relatives, his children, if he is prepared to leave all these and follow this path, then I would say that an untouchable is any day an infinitely superior chairman to a lawyer who is a finished gentleman, a brilliant member of his profession with a record of unique success, but he is absolutely no good for us. So, I would certainly ask you not to install anybody but honest and bravest men in your chairs. But, apart from that I would ask you to seek their co-operation. Go out of your way and get the co-operation of lawyers. But, that is again a smaller thing than the one which I have mentioned to you. Be charitable to all. Remember that we want to take them with us in our programme of swaraj. We do not estrange our countrymen from that. And, if we cannot possibly enlist their sympathy and their co-operation, there is something wrong in us. We have certainly not fulfilled to the letter and spirit the pledge of non-violence. So I would ask you really to think of these things, and remember them. I do not know if I have any thing more to say.

Questioned as to how a practising lawyer can serve the country according to the resolution, Mahatmaji said:

A practising lawyer can certainly wear khadi, but he cannot be a volunteer.

QUESTION: Suppose a lawyer out of sheer necessity is forced to remain a practising lawyer—he cannot be a volunteer, he has got a large family to support, he cannot risk going to jail.

MAHATMAJI: I know; such lawyers and such persons must keep out today because we cannot possibly find maintenance for thousands of people, and the present resolution is planned not in order to get the largest number of recruits at the sacrifice of quality, but to get the largest number consistently with the highest requirements as to quality. In other words, we must not risk quality for quantity. We shall really postpone the attainment of swaraj if in our search for quantity we sacrifice quality and, I can prophesy, we shall lose the battle in the end. I may tell you I can get all the labourers of the Ahmedabad mills—there are fifty thousand of them today—but I do not want a single one of them to sign the pledge without understanding it. I want only those who have been in the struggle for years, who understand the value of the pledge that they take up. I can see my way to get swaraj even with the fewest possible men of that type. I do not want a crore of volunteers who do not know what non-violence is, and who, be-

cause of their weakness to offer violence, follow or pretend to follow the Congress programme. I would far rather that they become co-operators frankly, veer to the Government side, and do what they like.

P: In that case, work will stop in some places for want of men.

MAHATMAJI: I don't mind that you have many associations, and many men about you to do your work, who do not want to go to jail. You will certainly get their help in connection with your work among the untouchables, or for temperance work, or in connection with swadeshi, but they cannot be members of the Volunteer Corps.[1] The Volunteer Corps is being formed in defiance of the Government notification, and only those are fit to go to jail who are pure-minded men.

SJT. ANANGA MOHAN GHOSE : I admit that, but can sacrifices only be sufficient for leadership, without intelligence?

MAHATMAJI: Two things are necessary—sacrifice and honesty. I said that if you have got an honest and a brave man he can lead today.

ANANGA BABU : He must have intelligence too.

MAHATMAJI: I cannot possibly imagine that a man who is offering intelligent sacrifice is not really intelligent enough to lead. Really, I feel that I can give you scores of instances of such men who are leading today.

ANANGA BABU : So far as our experience goes, we do not find such men.

MAHATMAJI: Because we have not given a chance so long to our other countrymen. We have really isolated them and so far we have insisted upon only those becoming patriots who know English—that has been our bane. Such men are certainly wanted.

ANANGA BABU : We fail to find non-co-operators with the necessary qualification to take up charge of the committee or become the president and so on.

MAHATMAJI: I do not deny that there is difficulty, but we can do all our work with the materials we have at hand today, if only those materials could be rendered efficient, and sufficiently mobile, and brave enough to lead us.

ANANGA BABU : Another question with regard to volunteers : There is a clause that the volunteers cannot expect anything in case they go to jail, but so long as they work as volunteers are they to get any remuneration?

[1] Gandhiji subsequently disowned this statement; *vide* "Practising Lawyers and Volunteering", 2-2-1922.

MAHATMAJI: If they are getting it, they may; but personally, I would, for these Volunteer Corps, ask for men who do not require any money at all. The programme we contemplate is that as soon as one registers oneself as a volunteer he will be arrested in due course in a few days, but if the Government simply does not do anything and yet does not withdraw the notification, then the question of payment occurs, and then the payment has got to be made to those whose services are required, but not to those who simply register their names, and are not in the active volunteers' list, or in the profit-bearing list. I would not really care for volunteers who would go about from village to vilage delivering speeches. That time is gone, but we want volunteers who can organize swadeshi or any such thing and bring in money to us and organize India so as to get rid of our wretched pauperism.

SJT. GUNADA CH. SEN : The Congress Resolution speaks about cessation of all other activities—shall we not then go on with our swadeshi, national schools and so on?

MAHATMAJI: So far as necessary. We may not be opening new centres which require the services of many volunteers. We cannot spare so many because we want all hands to be enlisted for going to jail and if the Government take them we must supply every available hand. Therefore, the use of "so far as necessary" comes here. If we find [that we have] exhausted the list of those who are engaged in swadeshi, we have got to draw them from the national schools which absorb a very large staff. That staff must be made free. When all other national activities stop, it means the staff have come out.

SJT. SURESH CH. MAJUMDAR : You have spoken about public meetings : kindly instruct us whether we are to send volunteers out on the streets to court arrest for the sake of arrest, as we are doing hitherto.

MAHATMAJI: You may do that so long as they continue to arrest, but when they do not I would not worry about that. But, as long as they continue to arrest, there is no other work but simply to go out and be arrested.

A DELEGATE : Can we stop paying *chowkidari* tax?

MAHATMAJI: Not yet. That would be offensive civil disobedience.

Questioned as to the meaning of untouchables, Mahatmaji said:

Untouchables are all those whose touch we in our arrogance think defiles us—that is untouchable. Therefore, we must not

only mechanically touch them; we must serve them. We must eat after we have found food for them, that is, found the means of procuring their livelihood, if they are starving. We must drink after we have given them to drink, if they are thirsty. If one is suffering from fever or bitten by a snake, I would kiss that wound just as I would if my son were bitten by a snake. No interdining, no interdrinking, no intermarriage. That is, it is not prohibited, but that is not insisted upon.

Questioned as to whether one can volunteer oneself and go straight to jail with foreign clothes on, Mahatmaji said :

It is not only mischievous but injurious to the cause. All those who come must wear khadi. It is a privilege to go to jail. He does not oblige us by going to jail. He obliges himself.

A delegate remarked that in that case there would not be enough volunteers as pure hand-spun and hand-woven could not be had in Bengal in sufficient quantity.

MAHATMAJI: If, then, there are not enough volunteers in Bengal, I should think she should be swept into the Bay of Bengal and make room for better men and women.

A delegate from Midnapur having questioned as to who would take up the work of the teachers of the national schools in case they went to jail, Mahatmaji said that Midnapur ladies who were expert spinners might take up their work.

QUESTION : When the public are assaulted, what is the duty of the volunteers?

MAHATMAJI: They should go and intervene to prevent that and receive the blows themselves.

A BARABAZAR DELEGATE : What would they do with the merchants who signed and gave an undertaking not to order foreign cloth up to February and March?

MAHATMAJI: We have to ask them to sign again.

Mahatmaji, after having spent two hours with the delegates, retired.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 14-1-1922

53. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

Friday [December 30, 1921][1]

CHI. DEVDAS,

Herewith Mrs. Joseph's letter. I have written to her to say that you will send her money from there. You may meet the Directors of the *Independent* and make the necessary arrangements or take whatever other steps which may suggest themselves to you. See that she does not find herself in difficulty when you go to jail.

I am very glad that Govind[2] went to jail. That they have not yet arrested you is a deliberate thing on their part. Do not worry about this. If they do not arrest you, the new undertaking will be put on its feet; if they do your arrest will arouse the people.

Paul Richard[3] is staying here at present. I introduced Kishorelal[4] to him. The former had recently been here to meet him and so met me also. Miss Petersen[5] is here today. She came yesterday and will leave today. Mr. Richard will leave on Sunday. Mrs. Santanam is still here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 7683

[1] Paul Richard referred to in the last paragraph was in Ahmedabad during the last week of December, 1921. He visited the Gujarat Mahavidyalaya on Saturday, December 31, 1921, accompanied by Gandhiji.

[2] Son of Madan Mohan Malaviya. He was arrested on December 20, 1921, for picketing but was subsequently discharged.

[3] A French writer

[4] Mashruwala

[5] Anne Marie Petersen, who along with Esther, a Danish Missionary, worked in South India and lived at Sabarmati for some time.

54. INTERVIEW WITH U. P. CONGRESS LEADERS

AHMEDABAD,
December 30, 1921

Mahatma Gandhi said:

It is not necessary just yet to start civil disobedience. It is enough to get ourselves enrolled as volunteers—regardless of our being arrested or not—and to continue the work entrusted to us.

My methods of securing swaraj are the very reverse of those advocated by Hasrat Mohani. If I thought we were fit for it I would at once declare complete independence—because having made such a declaration it would be a sin to go on using the railway, post and telegraph and so on. If a majority of people join me, complete independence can be secured within just three months.

Now if my countrymen desert me, or even my wife deserts me, I am ready to work alone.

It is the wish of Sir Harcourt Butler, the Governor of the United Provinces, that there may be a rebellion such as that of 1857 and that then the people may plead for pity.

It would be better for the present to halt the work of setting up the national *Kotwali*[1]. But since the work has begun it is only right that it should be continued.

I am sorry that the work of propagating swadeshi in U. P. has not been done as much as was necessary. I am dissatisfied about it.

In the offices of Congress Committees the work of enrolling volunteers should be continued.

Pandit Motilal Nehru wants that the *Independent* should be brought out in Hindi and Urdu. Volunteers should extend full help in its publication.

We should not entertain violent thoughts even towards thieves and dacoits. Ahimsa should be our sole mode of conduct.

So long as people are not ready for jail, so long as we have not got ready to face death and have not mastered anger, the problems of the Punjab atrocities and Khilafat cannot be solved.

Swaraj means our full control over the army.

Lists of volunteers should be published in newspapers and sent on to the national *Kotwali*.

[1] Literally, police station. Here, headquarters.

Volunteers should move about and sell khadi. Their dress should be that of a low paid *chaprasi*. Picketing of shops selling foreign cloth is unnecessary. But picketing of liquor shops should continue.

National schools should be turned into hand-spinning and hand-weaving factories. Boys below eighteen years of age should work in them and women should supervise them.

Students over eighteen years of age and teachers who refuse to be volunteers should be expelled from schools.

The Hindi *Swarajya* published from Allahabad should be handwritten. Those whose properties are attached should renounce them with pleasure, for it is a sin even to own property in such a tyrannical regime. The properties will be given back to the owners as soon as swaraj is attained.

[From Hindi]
Aaj, 1-1-1922

55. *MESSAGE TO UTKAL*[1]

December 30, 1921

Interviewed by Sjts. Bhagirathi Mohapatro, Gopbandhu Chowdhury, Niranjan Patnaik and Naba Krishna Chowdhury, Mahatmaji delivered the following message on the 30th December last (1921):

Utkal haunts me. The scene I have witnessed is simply shocking. Banish poverty from the land. Give the message of charkha to every home. Make Utkal the store-house of khaddar for the rest of India. Feed the hungry men and women. This is the best political training that you can give to your people. Don't worry yourselves with the question of aggressive mass civil disobedience. If the Government throws a challenge, go on recruiting volunteers and at least fifty thousand Utkalis, I hope, will fill up the jails.

The Bombay Chronicle, 14-1-1922

[1] The old name of Orissa. The message is reproduced in the source from *The Servant*.

56. SPEECH AT GUJARAT VIDYAPITH, AHMEDABAD

December 31, 1921

Mr. Paul Richard delivered a lecture at the Gujarat Vidyapith, Ahmedabad, on Saturday morning, on "Message of India", Mahatma Gandhi presiding. Mr. Richard spoke in French and Mrs. Sarojini Naidu read a translation.

Mahatma Gandhi said he thought it was a great honour to be present at the lecture. Although he could not spare time owing to his having to interview the Congress delegates for the last two days, he had come to the lecture to hear Mr. Richard. He asked the audience to take up and follow what was good in Mr. Richard.

The Bombay Chronicle, 2-1-1922

57. TELEGRAM TO MAULANA ABDUL BARI[1]

January 1, 1922

DICTATORSHIP DOES NOT ARISE WHILE WORKING COMMITTEE CAN BE CALLED. AUTHORITY SAME AS WORKING COMMITTEE'S WHEN LATTER NOT POSSIBLE CALL. IMPRISONMENT ASSAULT DEATH TO BE SUFFERED NOT FOR THEIR SAKE BUT FOR SAKE RELIGION OR COUNTRY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7779

[1] In reply to Abdul Bari's telegram from Bombay, dated December 31, 1921, which read: " . . . Kindly wire answer of following so that I may remove doubts arising from religious point of view: Is your authority as a dictator the same which Working Committee had or more? Can Working Committee confiscate dictator's authority. What will be main object of Volunteer Corps to suffer imprisonment, assault, even death while serving for country or to suffer them for the sake of them?"

58. DIRECTIONS TO KRISHNADAS[1]

[Silence Day, Monday, January 2, 1922][2]

Directions to Kristodas

Where are all the letters received in Khadi Nagar and not assorted?

You may prepare a digest of the convictions and interesting paras in the reports.

Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi, Vol. II, p. 250

59. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

Wednesday [January 4, 1922][3]

CHI. DEVDAS,

Your paper[4] has been coming, no doubt, but there has been no letter from you. Even in the midst of all this labour, do not forget to improve your handwriting. This time, you will see in *Young India* a great deal [of matter] from *Independent*. We propose to give a digest of all the issues of your paper, so that you will easily have its weekly [edition]. You have used the phrase "mute silence". What could this "mute silence" be?

The impression of letters [in your paper] is not yet clear enough to be legible. I think it would be better if you discontinue typing altogether. The person who writes for you has a good hand.

Your third page is not good. Too much space has been left in typing. Who will give news about the Governor of Bengal? The man who writes that Malaviyaji breaks the law must be sent to the gallows. He did not even go to Madras.

On the second page, the title "Round Table Conference" appears twice.

[1] From a facsimile

[2] From the source

[3] The members of the Nehru family left Ahmedabad after the Congress session which ended on December 28, 1921, and Govind Malaviya was sentenced before January 8, 1922.

[4] The handwritten *Independent*, which Devdas had been bringing out after Mahadev Desai's arrest and conviction

Today members of the Nehru family left for Lucknow, all of them in third class. You may write a note on this. Urmila-devi, too, travels in the same way.

I shall be in Bombay on the 14th. The Moderate Conference is being held on that day. I may have to be there on the 15th also. Sundaram will stay on here for the present.

You should go over every line of your paper. You may still reduce the matter, but you should see that what you give is sound and in a presentable form.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

You ought to give news regarding swadeshi. Those who have leisure should work for swadeshi, spin, card, weave, sell and so on.

I have received a wire about Govind's re-arrest. I cannot imagine why he has been arrested this time. I shall know about it from you hereafter.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 7720

60. *INTERVIEW TO "SWARAJYA"*[1]

[Before *January 5, 1922*]

The special correspondent of the *Swarajya* writes from Ahmedabad :

I interviewed Mahatmaji on the present situation, regarding the proposed truce[2].

QUESTION : What is the opinion of Lala Lajpat Rai and Motilal Nehru?

ANSWER: As regards Motilalji, his opinion is contained in the latest issue of *Young India*[3]. Lalaji has asked me not to worry about those who are in jail.

Suppose volunteer organizations are not declared unlawful in other provinces and public meetings are not prohibited, then what should volunteers and Congress workers do, to get into jails?

In their case civil disobedience can only be of an offensive nature. For this they should wait till I have launched upon it.

[1] Reproduced by the source from the *Swarajya*

[2] Being negotiated by Malaviya

[3] Dated 29-12-1921, under the caption "Another Gaol Letter". Motilal had written : ". . . 'No reduction in the triple demand,' should be the only basis of any negotiations . . . "

Meanwhile, they must go on organizing the volunteers, must spin at least four hours a day, and produce at least one *tola* per hour, of even, twisted yarn of about 10 or 12 counts.

Should the volunteers picket foreign cloth shops and liquor shops?

They may be picketed by people who understand their responsibility, and do it peacefully.

How long do you expect the struggle to continue in the new year?

I don't know. In the present state, it may not continue for more than two months. We must be prepared for indiscriminate flogging and shooting by the Government from all parts of India. We must not flinch even then. The present struggle is not so much to right the Punjab and Khilafat wrongs, much less for swaraj. We are now fighting for the elementary rights of free speech and freedom to form associations, and on this question we expect Moderates and others to be with us. When this intermediate skirmish will be finished, our way will be clear.

Mahatmaji added that any swaraj scheme must include the control of the military and the police.

The Bombay Chronicle, 5-1-1922

61. NOTES

Jail Treatment

Starvation, or its alternative, canine food, no covering much less any worth the name to protect against the severe Delhi winter, microbe-infected, lice-laden, blood-stained tatters, the worn off relics of common felons, and finally, the awful ghastly climax, preferential treatment or release, constantly suggested and enforced in favour of the very rare civil resister, whose frailty succumbs to the temptation.

Such is the report sent by Lala Shankar Lal of Delhi as he was being taken from the Delhi Jail to Mianwali. The friend that has sent me the report says:

We have heard of the closed Moplah death wagon, but this Delhi Jail wherein some of the best and noblest of our workers have been clapped, has by ingenious cunning been converted for non-co-operators into an open area where death and the devil hold their court. Emotion chokes me as I write. Is it that the hand which is silencing many a Shankar Lal in our beautiful and lovable country is stifling also my feeble voice? Woeful tales of non-co-operators being flogged till the hand that flogs

them tires of the process, of civil resisters being stripped of all vestige of human covering and subjected to a slow and gradual death from toxicity and infection, have filled my ears.

The writer is a highly cultured sensitive young man. I have removed some of the descriptive passages from the letter. Unused to suffering he has been deeply touched by the version of the ill-treatment given in the Delhi Jail to non-co-operators. But the substance of the charge is true. For it is corroborated from many sources unconnected with one another. There seems to be no doubt that the Government having failed to bend the non-co-operators and to extort an apology from them by mere confinement, the order has gone round for inflicting physical hardships on civil resisters. There does come a time when with all the will in the world the flesh refuses to suffer any further and makes the spirit its unwilling slave. The administrators are exploiting their knowledge of this to humble the proud spirit of civil resisters. And I would not be surprised if some of them not being able to stand the inhuman treatment that is evidently being systematized apologize in order to escape unbearable torture of the flesh.

But if the spirit has at times been found weak enough to yield to the flesh after a certain point, it has also been found superior to the most excruciating tortures. Given sufficient previous mental preparation, the very extreme of suffering becomes an anaesthetic that deadens pain; where the spirit is willing, the exultation induced by the willingness counteracts the sensation of pain. The pleasure of serving one's country or religion more than balances the pain involved in it.

It is then the duty of a civil resister to bear all torture of the flesh but it is equally his duty to resist insanitation or humiliation. He will cheerfully take the lash. He must not crawl. He will cheerfully go bare-bodied and shiver to death. He must resolutely reject germ-laden filthy blankets or shirts. He may go without food, but he must refuse to take bread or dal laden with pebbles. He may do without his bath but he must refuse to bathe in foul water. Where submission is unmanly resistance becomes a duty.

Well have the civil resisters got the privilege of voluntary suffering. It is the noblest service. They are purifying the jails. Even felons are entitled to human treatment. Let the authorities give the plainest food and clothing but both must be clean and sufficient.

It is no pleasure to me to publish accounts of inhuman treatment no matter where and by whom meted out. I do not

want to believe that human beings can be so brutal as many stories related about them would prove them to be. I am most anxious that this fight is fought in a sportsmanlike spirit. It cuts my human flesh to the quick to find human beings not playing the game.

But if it is to be a dirty game on the other side, so be it. Non-co-operators have made no stipulation, they have no choice but to take things as they come to them and cut their way through every difficulty. Is it not reported of the Japanese that when they came to a ditch their army could not cross, they filled it with human corpses? Shall we do less because we are vowed not to kill but only to be killed? Our pledge exacts from us more than from the Japanese soldier. For we must go through the fire without the drum beat of war.

The charge brought by my correspondent is serious. Let me adduce corroborative evidence. Here is a graphic and detailed description of the treatment of Mahadev Desai, the editor of the *Independent*. Readers of *Young India* know his connection with this journal.[1] He is one of the soberest of workers. He has a most sensitive frame. A friend visited him with Mrs. Desai. The writer says:

> We are preparing for strong repression. I have wired you regarding Mahadevbhai's imprisonment. He had received a summons to attend court for trial. He was quite joyful when he went to jail. We went yesterday to see him but the jailer would not let us. I took food, clothing and books. But the jailer would not take them. This morning we were able to meet him. He has been put with the ordinary criminals and is being subjected to all the jail regulations. He was dressed in jail clothes. He had a black shirt with sleeves reaching to the elbow and half pants. The clothes were dirty, stinking and lousy. He had two blankets which could not have been washed for months and which must have been and were full of lice. He had a rusty iron bowl for water, so rusty as to make the water unfit in a few minutes for drink. Therefore, that water could not be drunk during night. It would be found perfectly yellow in the morning. There is a dirty tank from which drinking water is taken and which is used for bathing too. I do not know whether buckets are supplied. A loin-cloth is supplied for bathing. But no towel is allowed for drying. After the body is dried in the sun the same dirty clothes have to be worn again. It is impossible in the cold climate of this place for the weak body of Mahadevbhai to wash these clothes and to remain bare-bodied whilst these clothes are drying. He has only jail food. He took nothing

[1] Mahadev Desai was the publisher of *Young India*.

last night. He had something like gruel this morning. It contained pebbles and other dirt. For natural purposes the prisoners have to go out. And they use the drinking pot to carry their water in. For night use an uncovered pot is supplied. The only thing not yet done is to put irons on.

I hear from another quarter that special instructions have been issued to subject him to ill-treatment for the reason that Mahadev Desai's was a calculated defiance of authority. That the *Independent* could be issued independently of printing and the consequent declaration proved too much for the authorities.

Well, I have no doubt that Mahadev Desai will prove his editorial skill inside the prison walls by retaining his independence in the face of physical tortures. Let me console the reader with the information that Mahadev Desai carries with him a heart of love which has place in it for his torturer and carries too a stock of spiritual anaesthetics in the shape of sacred *bhajans*[1] which he will sing to ward off all feeling of pain. I do believe it as literally true that Mirabai[2] never felt the pains inflicted upon her at the instance of her husband. Her love of God and conscious repetition of that precious name kept her cheerful for ever. I can only picture the Rajput women of old rejoicing as they leapt into the funeral pyre with the name of God on their lips. Latimer[3] certainly never felt the pain as he majestically stretched forth his hand straight into the fire. His faith in God and His righteousness had saved him. The age of miracles is not past. But a little faith in God and His protecting power, and we are ensured against *unbearable* sufferings. Let no civil resister with faith in his mission doubt that at the crucial moment God will protect him.

I shall be surprised if Mahadev Desai does not by his humble yet dignified bearing melt even the stony hearts of his persecutors.

But to resume the corroborative narrative. Let us look at Lucknow. Things seemed to be going only too well there. The necessary conveniences were allowed to Panditji Nehru and his co-prisoners. So much was this the case that I had begun to think that the United Provinces Government, whilst they followed out the consistent policy of imprisoning those who chose to disregard their notifications, were civilized enough to treat political prisoners with courtesy and decency. But a change seems to have

[1] Devotional songs

[2] A medieval saint-poetess of Rajasthan. Queen of Mewar, she spent her days in the worship of Shri Krishna, incurring her husband's displeasure.

[3] Hugh Latimer (*c.* 1485-1555); the English reformer who was condemned as a heretic and burnt at the stake

come over even Lucknow. I have just received the information that Sheikh Khaliquzzaman and ten others have been removed from the District to the Central Jail and the conveniences that were given them are to be withdrawn and that probably the visits would be disallowed. Pandit Nehru and the remaining prisoners have sent an energetic protest against such invidious distinctions and have asked to be treated in every respect in the same manner as other political prisoners. It must be a matter of pride to every Indian that some of the best men of India are today putting themselves on a par with the common people and seeking no privileges for themselves.

1st January

Since writing the foregoing notes I have received a wire saying that Mr. Desai had been seen again and that he was hale and hearty and was better treated. I am glad for the sake of the authorities that the treatment has been changed for the better. But the insanitation described above should have been impossible from the very beginning. That a Mahadev Desai has compelled better treatment is a matter of little moment. The question is one of larger humanity. What must be the condition of ordinary prisoners? Have they any rights? This imprisonment of cultured men is from that standpoint a godsend. The political prisoners will incidentally solve this question of human rights.

THE NEW "INDEPENDENT"

The written edition of the *Independent* commenced by Mr. Mahadev Desai when the security of Rs. 2,000 was forfeited continues its difficult career. It has been regularly published in its new form. Arrangements have been made for a succession of editors should the present one be arrested. Its front page is proudly ornamented with the names of the editors and assistant editors already imprisoned within a short space of time. These are Messrs Ranga Iyar[1], George Joseph, Kabadi and Mahadev Desai. I do not think any other paper except the *Zamindar* of Lahore has such a proud record. I publish in another column gleanings from the seven issues to hand. I have already published in full the first issue. The reader will not fail to notice the care with which the news items are collected, collated and compressed nor will he fail to note the condensed thought in the editorial notes. I do hope that the Allahabad public will watch the experiment with sympathy and support the appeal made by its youthful editor. The

[1] C. S. Ranga Iyer

enterprise is fraught with great possibilities. The Government may not stop at anything and arrest every one of the editors. The object of the new experiment is to demonstrate that when there is a sufficient number of men to stand its punishments, no Government can enforce its will in opposition to that of the people. Before we feel and become free we must be able to dispense with all its favours. We must acknowledge that in spite of our non-co-operation we do indulge in many things by the grace of the Government. If it chooses, it can isolate everyone of us and deny to us the use of railways, post and telegraph. All it cannot curb without our consent is the spirit within us. And in order that India's spirit may be and remain free, we must be prepared to face and conquer every obstacle the Government may place in our way.

Indeed, if the editor can secure the services of good copyists, he will be able to make a thousand copies without difficulty. I would advise him to be still more sparing of words. He will find that by a little practice he will be able to say all that he has to say in two sides of a foolscap sheet. I promise that the compressed newspaper will be far more readable than the long drawn out agony that the printed sheets inflict on the public from day to day. When all the padding, the verbiage, the flaring headlines and advertisements are removed from the average daily, one will find that the remainder can be easily reduced to a foolscap sheet. Let the editor try to give the news and the thoughts the others do not give and he will find that his copy will be multiplied a thousandfold without effort. At the same time let him remember that a written daily requires a different type of organization. Its agents are more copyists than distributors. The manager of a written daily will keep a list of agents and subscribers who are served by such agents. The agents in their turn will have local copyists who will make enough copies for their respective areas. Thus a more intimate and living relation can be established between the staff of a written daily and its readers. What is more, when the idea is properly worked out, it will be found that there is less worry, less waste of time, energy and money and more lasting and quicker results.

Notice to a Barrister

Mr. T. A. K. Sherwani, it will be remembered, was in charge of the National Muslim University when immediately after the disturbance in Aligarh he was arrested. Mr. Sherwani is undergoing his sentence at the central prison at Naini, Allahabad. He has now been served with a notice from the High Court to show

cause why his name should not be struck off the roll of advocates or why he should not be suspended from practice on the ground that he has been convicted under Section 153A I.P.C. He has to show cause on the 23rd instant. Two years ago the best of lawyers would have shivered to receive such a notice. It would have been regarded as an impending doom. Today happily things have changed. I know that the notice has not disturbed a single night's rest for Mr. Sherwani. He had already suspended practice as a non-co-operator. And he has faith enough in himself and his country to know that when swaraj is established as it must be very shortly, his name will be restored with honour, even if it is removed by the High Court on the 23rd.

Young India, 5-1-1922

62. *THE CONGRESS AND AFTER*

The Substance

The Congress week was a week of joy and celebration. None thought that swaraj was not attained. Every one seemed to be conscious of the growing national strength. There was confidence and hope written in every face. The Reception Committee had provided for admitting one hundred thousand visitors to the Congress *pandal*. But the lowest calculation puts down the figure at two lacs. The rush was so great that it became impossible to issue either season tickets or the entrance tickets. And this phenomenal attendance would have been still larger if all kinds of false rumours had not been started to scare away people. The imprisonment of leaders and workers and their courage has filled the people with a new hope and a new joy. There was a feeling in the air that the people had found in suffering the surest remedy for the attainment of freedom and breaking down the mightiest force that might be pitted against it.

The Constitution has worked for a year and in my humble opinion it has proved a thorough success. There was a serious business air about the Subjects Committee which had ample time for deliberation. It was a Committee not chosen haphazard, but deliberately by electors who knew what they were doing. The Congress itself was an impressive spectacle. Hakimji[1] made an ideal and patient President in the place of Deshbandhu Chitta Ranjan

[1] Hakim Ajmal Khan

Das. The delegates insisted upon their doubts being solved before they voted. They insisted on understanding everything that was going on.

Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel, Chairman of the Reception Committee, took no more than fifteen minutes to read his address in Hindi. There were no speeches to induct the President. The whole of the function was performed by the All-India Congress Committee. That saved at least two hours of the twelve thousand delegates and visitors. The President's address took no more than twenty minutes. Every speech was to the point and not a minute was allowed to be wasted in idle talk.

In the nature of things too it could not well be otherwise. The resolutions were addressed to the nation. They presented a programme of earnest work that had got to be done if the nation was to find her place in the world.

Extraordinary care was, therefore, taken both in the Subjects Committee and the Congress to see that the resolutions were properly understood before they were voted upon.

So much for the business side.

The Exhibition

The spectacular was no less impressive. The *pandal* itself was a majestic structure covered with khadi all over. The arches also of khadi, the Subjects Committee *pandal* of khadi. A beautiful fountain surrounded by green lawns ornamented the front of the *pandal*. At the back was a large *pandal* for overflow meetings where all that had gone on in the Congress *pandal* was explained to the thousands of spectators, men and women, who could not gain entrance for love or money.

The whole ground was a blaze of light at night, and being on the river bank and just at the end of Ellis Bridge, presented for full eight days for thousands of admiring spectators on the other side a gorgeous appearance.

The exhibition ground was quite near. It attracted huge crowds. It was a complete success. The attendance was beyond all expectation; no less than forty thousand visited the exhibition daily. It was a unique demonstration of what India can produce. The chief attraction was the party from Chikacole who demonstrated all the processes of cotton leading to the drawing out of yarn up to 100 counts. No machinery could possibly make the snow-like slivers that the delicate hands of the women of Andhra produced with their simple bones. No machine could draw the exquisite thread that the delicate fingers of the Andhra women drew.

The music of the spindle, as it performed its gentle revolutions, is incapable of being reproduced. The evolution that khadi has undergone during the year could also be studied in a room where every variety of khadi was collected. The paintings from Shantiniketan and elsewhere and the beautiful carvings afforded instruction to the close student as well as the ordinary spectator. The musical concerts in which musicians from all parts of India took part was an irresistible attraction for thousands of spectators. It ended in the convening by Vishnu Digamber Shastri[1] of the first All-India Musical Conference whose object is to popularize music in national assemblies and organize *bhajan mandalis*[2].

KHADI IN EVIDENCE

The Khadi Nagar, the adjoining Muslim Nagar, and the Khilafat *pandal* next to it were a triumphant demonstration of Hindu-Muslim unity and an ocular demonstration of the hold that khadi has on the public. The Reception Committee used only khadi manufactured in Gujarat and worth three hundred and fifty thousand rupees. The Committee paid Rs. 50,000 for the use of the khadi. All the tents including a big kitchen and storehouse were covered with khadi. Nearly two thousand volunteers, both Hindu and Mussulman and including a few Parsis and Christians, looked after all the arrangements for the guests in both Khadi Nagar and Muslim Nagar.

The sanitary arrangements were a special feature. Trenches were dug for the purpose. Perfect privacy was secured by khadi partitions. And the excreta were covered over with clean earth after every use. Every time the trench was used, it was, therefore, found to be in a clean condition. The work of attending to the trenches was done not by paid *Bhangis*[3] but by unpaid volunteers belonging to all castes and religions. Those only were taken who had no repugnance to this necessary work. The reader may not know that the process is so clean and so expeditious that the cleaner does not have to touch either the excreta or the earth. He has but to take a few shovelfuls of the cleanest earth, and with it carefully cover up the dirt. The result of this simple attention was that the camp was clean, sweet and free from the plague of flies. All the camps were lighted by electricity.

[1] Pandit Vishnu Digambar Paluskar, an eminent exponent of Indian classical music

[2] Groups singing devotional songs

[3] A backward Hindu Community traditionally regarded as untouchable

WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

I must not omit to mention the Women's Conference presided by Bi-Amma, the brave mother of the Ali Brothers. It was a soul-stirring spectacle. The whole of the spacious *pandal* was filled by no less than fifteen thousand women. I do not say that they all understood what was going on. But I do say that they knew instinctively what it was. They knew that their assembly advanced India's cause and that they were expected to play their part side by side with men.

In the midst of all this rush there was, so far as I am aware, no accident. The police, be it said to their credit, never interfered with anything or anybody. On the Congress side of the bridge, all arrangements were left to the Congress and the Khilafat volunteers.

THE DARK SIDE

So far I have given the bright side of the picture. But like every picture the Congress picture, too, has its shades. Though there was the greatest enthusiasm, there was at times unruliness on the part of the visitors. When they grew impatient, they made a rush for the *pandal* and forced entrance once or twice. It was all good-humoured but it could also prove disastrous. We must be able to regulate such functions in perfect order and that is possible only when the mass of people instinctively and voluntarily obey instructions from their own men. Self-restraint is the key to swaraj, self-government. Even the delegates were not all punctilious in obeying instructions. Some of them would not even occupy the blocks reserved for them. They did not hesitate even to suggest that they were out for civil (?) disobedience and would, therefore, sit where they liked. Even some members of the All-India Congress Committee were not above such incivil criminal disobedience. Some delegates would not pay for their board and lodging. And I am sorry to say that there was even impersonation by at least one Gujarati who used a friend's ticket as visitor although he knew that the ticket bore his friend's name and that it was non-transferable. What adds to the grief is that he is a well-known member of the Provincial Congress Committee.

AND AFTER

When, therefore, I think of the darker side of the picture my heart sinks within me. I know why there is delay in our realizing our ideal. But when I think of the brighter side, the picture is too attractive to enable the shades materially to mar its beauty. At the same time it would not do for us to be forgetful and relax our vigilance. The movement depends for its success only upon deve-

loping our moral strength. Even as one false note spoils a whole musical piece, so does a single individual suffice to crush a great movement like ours. Let us remember that we have staked our all upon Truth and Non-violence. Whatever others may be able to do being free from any such pledge, bound by our own pledge we are sure to fall to pieces if we break our own deliberate pledge. As, therefore, I have often said in these pages, the thorough working of the Congress Constitution leads automatically to the establishment of swaraj. Let us see.

Financial

Though the All-India Congress Committee has a fair balance still at hand, the provinces undoubtedly will have used up the monies left with them. They have an automatic source of income. Every Congress member is liable to pay four annas per year to enable him to retain his or her vote. If, therefore, each province has its quota of members, it must be able to collect at least Rs. 50,000, counting two lacs to be the least number on the roll of membership. I have been told that this is merely a mirage, that it costs more to collect the amount than it is worth. A government that spends more than it earns is a despotic or a corrupt government. The Congress is claimed to be a voluntary organization. And if we are unable to collect our subscriptions at a nominal cost, we have no right to exist. Under swaraj we shall expect to get our revenue at no more than 2½ per cent cost and then not by force but by the free will of the people. The least, therefore, that we are entitled to expect is that every province must now be able to finance itself. It ought not to be difficult again to get at least one crore members, i.e., twenty-five lacs of rupees throughout all India for membership. Indeed, if we are a growingly popular organization, say a government, we should be able to double our membership. We should be able to have enough number of unpaid honest volunteers to do just this one work of collection and no more. If we have not them, we must declare our bankruptcy. If we represent a healthy and natural growth, we must be able to collect this nominal personal annual tax without any effort whatsoever. And as with the Congress organizations, so with its many institutions, colleges, schools, weaving factories, etc. No institution is worth keeping that does not command local support by reason of its own moral strength. Only that institution is a necessity in a district which is supported by its inhabitants. The biggest missionary institutions financed from America or England are a superimposition and have nowhere been assimilated by the

people. If the missionaries had from the very commencement relied purely upon the goodwill and support of the people, they would have rendered infinitely greater service to India. Even so if Congress organizations and institutions are supported from the central body, they are likely to become foreign growths and hardly beneficial to the people. It may be laid down as a general rule that no local institution should exist which is not locally supported. Self-reliance is the surest test of capacity for self-government. It is possible that there are places or provinces which have not yet become self-conscious. They will need to be developed and helped in the initial stages. They cannot today be counted in any scheme of battle we may devise. In this swift struggle we must rely only upon those places that have developed political consciousness. It must, therefore, be in the rarest cases that the central body may be expected to finance local effort.

UNTOUCHABILITY

Similarly we must make a Herculean effort to deal with the question of untouchability. Not until the "untouchables" certify to the reformation in Hinduism, may we claim to have done anything in the matter. To my dismay I have found much misunderstanding on this question even in one of the most advanced and best awakened provinces, namely Andhra. The removal of untouchability means the aboliton of the fifth caste. There should, therefore, be no objection to a *Panchama*[1] boy drawing water from the common well of a village and to his attending its common school. He should freely exercise all the rights of a non-Brahmin. In the name of religion we Hindus have made a fetish of outward observances, and have degraded religion by making it simply a question of eating and drinking. Brahminism owes its unrivalled position to its self-abnegation, its inward purity, its severe austerity,—all these illumined by knowledge. Hindus are doomed if they attach undue importance to the spiritual effects of foods and human contacts. Placed as we are in the midst of trials and temptations from within, and touched and polluted as we are by all the most untouchable and the vilest thought currents, let us not, in our arrogance, exaggerate the influence of contact with people whom we often ignorantly and more often arrogantly consider to be our inferiors. Before the throne of the Almighty we shall be judged, not by what we have eaten nor by whom we have been touched but by whom we have served and how. Inasmuch as we serve a single human being in distress, we shall find favour in the sight

[1] A backward Hindu community traditionally regarded as untouchable

of God. Bad and stimulating or dirty foods we must avoid as we must avoid bad contact. But let us not give these observances a place out of all proportion to their importance. We dare not use abstinence from certain foods as a cover for fraud, hypocrisy, and worse vices. We dare not refuse to serve a fallen or a dirty brother lest his contact should injure our spiritual growth.

HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

There is still much left to be desired as to Hindu-Muslim unity. The combination is still suspected to be a menace to the free existence and growth of the small communities. Let us not repeat the mistakes of the past regarding our attitude towards the Moderates or the Independents. They must not feel unsafe in our company but by our toleration we must disarm their suspicion and opposition except as to our ideals.

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

We dare not pin our faith solely to civil disobedience. It is like the use of a knife to be used most sparingly if at all. A man who cuts away without ceasing cuts at the very root and finds himself without the substance he was trying to reach by cutting off the superficial hard crust. The use of civil disobedience will be healthy, necessary, and effective only if we otherwise conform to the laws of all growth. We must, therefore, give its full and, therefore, greater value to the adjective "civil" than to "disobedience". Disobedience without civility, discipline, discrimination, non-violence is certain destruction. Disobedience combined with love is the living water of life. Civil disobedience is a beautiful variant to signify growth, it is not discordance which spells death.

Young India, 5-1-1922

63. LEGALIZED PILLAGE

Whilst imprisonments of thousands of non-co-operators and their unavoidable hardships fill me with delight, the incidents I am about to relate, though they bring swaraj nearer, do grieve me. I would fain not think so ill of the Government as its acts now make me do.

The hartal[1] in Calcutta was apparently as thorough as it was in Allahabad. The citizens did not go mad as some did in

[1] On December 24, 1921

Bombay on the 17th November, although the danger in Calcutta of a breach of the peace by the people was the greatest. Their peacefulness was exemplary. Their secretary Babu Satkodipati Rai, Sardar Luchman Singh and Swami Vishwanand were arrested, as it would appear, for no fault save that of trying to keep the peace. Yet the people remained calm. Soon it will be possible to say of our countrymen that they can act without leaders or that all are leaders.

This spontaneous hartal in spite of the Herculean efforts to break it and preservation by the people of the peace despite provocation enraged the "civil" guards and the Europeans generally. The Viceroy is clearly to blame for it. He has brought the Prince when he should not have. Having brought him, he is trying to enforce public welcomes wherever the Prince is being taken and having failed in so doing, His Excellency has excited the passions of the British residents by calling the boycott an affront to the Prince and the British nation. The expected has happened. The police and the civil guard have construed the various declarations of the Government to be a licence to do as they please. They have looted shops. They have, if the reports in the *Servant* are true, walked into mosques with shoes on and even committed thefts. Innocent men have been injured. Some have even been killed. The people of Calcutta have borne this legalized lawlessness with great forbearance. They have done the right thing. In my opinion the shoes of scoffers have not desecrated the mosque in question. The amazing forbearance of the mosques-goers has made it more sacred and proved the religious nature of the struggle.

The authorities have behaved no better in parts of Bihar. Here is what the Secretary of the Thana Congress Committee, Sonpur, writes :

> On the 21st December 1921, at about 3 p.m., 10 volunteers with some workers were patrolling the road asking the shopkeepers to observe complete hartal on the 22nd instant, during the Prince's visit. When they reached the Sonpur Police Station, the S.P. (Mr. Parkin) who has been posted here on account of H.R.H. the Prince's visit came out with about 100 constables and snatched away from the volunteers flags, badges and even khadi clothes which they had on them and tore everything to pieces.
>
> Immediately after this the S.P. marched up to the Congress office followed by a band of constables in plain clothes and with lathis in their hands. On reaching the office the S.P. ordered the constables to plunder ("*Maro aur looto*" were the words he used); whereupon the constables broke open the door and entered the office room pushing the volunteers right and left and assaulting them. Mr. Parkin then thoroughly

searched the office, and breaking open a box which contained cash and an almirah which contained records, he then removed all records, khadi pieces, national calendars, pictures, badges, khadi caps, and religious books such as the *Ramayana* and the *Gita* which were there and burnt them in front of the office. They have also taken away about Rs. 120 in cash which was sent here from the District Congress Committee for distribution among the flood-affected people and also as contribution to the national school.

The following from Banaras completes the dismal picture of daylight robbery by the very Government that professes to act in the name of law and order :

During the last three days the volunteers did not parade the streets to court arrest. Altogether nearly 500 were arrested, most of them were released after 24 hours or fined Rs. 10. In default, the police stripped them of their blankets, coats, caps, shoes, watches etc.

One hears of such things done by hooligans. In law the persons and property of citizens are held so sacred that they cannot be touched without processes of law. I have seen debtors in courts walk away in unconcern with gold chains dangling on their waistcoats in spite of orders of payments against them. I have seen accused charged with crimes being fined and yet walking away with diamond rings on their fingers covering the amount of their fines. In all such cases recovery has been made after warrants of public attachment and public sales. But the law that is being just now administered against non-co-operators is a law without restraint. The caprice of an official represents the whole law in India. I imagine that even under martial law some of the things that are reported to have happened could not be done with impunity. It is a pity that human beings can be found and used for playing a game so low as is being played by the Government of India.

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64. INDEPENDENCE

Maulana Hasrat Mohani put up a plucky fight for independence on the Congress platform and then as President of the Muslim League and was happily each time defeated[1]. There is no mistake about the meaning of the Maulana. He wants to sever all connection with the British people even as partners and equals and even though the Khilafat question be satisfactorily solved. It will not do to urge that the Khilafat question can never be solved without complete independence. We are discussing merely the theory. It is common cause that if the Khilafat question cannot be solved without compelete independence, i.e., if the British people retain hostile attitude towards the aspirations of the Islamic world, there is nothing left for us to do but to insist upon complete independence. India cannot afford to give Britain even her moral support and must do without Britain's support, moral and material, if she cannot be induced to be friendly to the Islamic world.

But assuming that Great Britain alters her attitude as I know she will when India is strong, it will be religiously unlawful for us to insist on independence. For, it will be vindictive and petulant. It would amount to a denial of God for the refusal will then be based upon the assumption that the British people are not capable of response to the God in man. Such a position is untenable for both a believing Mussulman and a believing Hindu.

India's greatest glory will consist not in regarding Englishmen as her implacable enemies fit only to be turned out of India at the first available opportunity but in turning them into friends and partners in a new commonwealth of nations in the place of an Empire based upon exploitation of the weaker or undeveloped nations and races of the earth and, therefore, finally upon force.

Let us see clearly what swaraj together with the British connection means. It means undoubtedly India's ability to declare her independence if she wishes. Swaraj, therefore, will not be a free gift of the British Parliament. It will be a declaration of India's full self-expression. That it will be expressed through an Act of Parliament is true. But it will be merely a courteous ratification of the declared wish of the people of India even as it was in the case of the Union of South Africa. Not an unnecessary adverb in the

[1] During the Congress and the Muslim League sessions held at Ahmedabad in December 1921

Union scheme could be altered by the House of Commons. The ratification in our case will be of a treaty to which Britain will be party.

Such swaraj may not come this year, may not come within our generation. But I have contemplated nothing less. The British Parliament, when the settlement comes, will ratify the wishes of the people of India as expressed not through the bureaucracy but through her freely chosen representatives.

Swaraj can never be a free gift by one nation to another. It is a treasure to be purchased with a nation's best blood. It will cease to be a gift when we have paid dearly for it. The Viceroy was confused when he said that swaraj would have to come from the Parliament unless it came by the sword. He paid no compliment to his country when he allowed his audience to infer that England was incapable of listening to the moral pressure of suffering, and he insulted the intelligence of his audience if he wished it to understand that the British Parliament would give swaraj when it wished irrespective of India's desires and aspirations. The fact is that swaraj will be a fruit of incessant labour, suffering beyond measure.

But His Excellency is unused to any substitute for the sword and, therefore, does probably think that by exercising our debating skill in the legislative councils, some day or other we shall be able to impress the British Parliament with the desirability of granting us swaraj. He will soon learn that there is a better and more effective substitute for the sword and that is civil disobedience. It is daily becoming increasingly clear that civil disobedience will afford the course of suffering through which India must pass before she comes to her own.

We have not come to our own. There is still mutual distrust between Mussulmans and Hindus. The untouchables have not yet felt the glow of the Hindu touch. The Parsis and the Christians of India do not yet know their future under swaraj to a certainty. We have not yet learnt the art nor realized the necessity of obeying our own laws. The spinning-wheel has not yet found a permanent place in our homes. Khadi has not yet become the national garment. In other words, we have not yet understood the art or the conditions of self-protection.

There is still a body of opinion diminishing in volume but not yet negligible which considers that violence alone will bring swaraj to us and that, therefore, violence might be permitted to continue side by side with non-violence, i.e., our non-violence should be regarded as merely a prelude to and a preparation for violence.

Those who hold these views little know that their attitude constitutes a fraud upon the world. Our pledge requires that whilst we are under it we believe in the efficacy of non-violence for the quickest attainment of our goal. Each one of us is under a sacred obligation to cancel the pledge as soon as he believes that swaraj is unattainable by non-violence or except by violence. Non-violence is a creed while it lasts. It is an expedient because it is an experiment. But whilst we are under the pledge we are not only bound to believe in and observe non-violence but we are equally bound to persuade others to be non-violent and condemn those who do violence. I am more than ever convinced that we have not reached our goal because even we who have subscribed to the Congress creed have not all remained non-violent in word and deed nor endeavoured to be non-violent in thought or intent.

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65. THE IMMEDIATE ISSUE

Swaraj, the Khilafat, the Punjab occupy a subordinate place to the issue sprung upon the country by the Government. We must first make good the right of free speech and free association before we can make any further progress towards our goal. The Government would kill us if they could by a flank attack. To accept defeat in the matter of free speech and free association is to court disaster. If the Government is allowed to destroy non-violent activities in the country, however dangerous they may be to its existence, even the Moderates' work must come to a standstill. In the general interest, therefore, we must defend these elementary rights with our lives. We cannot be coerced into welcoming the Prince nor can we be coerced into disbanding volunteer associations or giving up any other activities which we may deem desirable for our growth.

The safest and the quickest way to defend these rights is to ignore the restriction. We must speak the Truth under a shower of bullets. We must band together in the face of bayonets. No cost is too great for purchasing these fundamental rights. And on this there can be no compromise, no parleying, no conference. Withdrawal of notifications of disbandment and prohibition orders and discharge of all who are imprisoned for non-violent activities must precede any conference or settlement. We must be content to die, if we cannot live as free men and women.

I wish I could persuade everybody that civil disobedience is the inherent right of a citizen. He dare not give it up without ceasing to be a man. Civil disobedience is never followed by anarchy. Criminal disobedience can lead to it. Every State puts down criminal disobedience by force. It perishes, if it does not. But to put down civil disobedience is to attempt to imprison conscience. Civil disobedience can only lead to strength and purity. A civil resister never uses arms and hence he is harmless to a State that is at all willing to listen to the voice of public opinion. He is dangerous for an autocratic State, for he brings about its fall by engaging public opinion upon the matter for which he resists the State. Civil disobedience, therefore, becomes a sacred duty when the State has become lawless, or which is the same thing, corrupt. And a citizen that barters with such a State shares its corruption or lawlessness.

It is, therefore, possible to question the wisdom of applying civil disobedience in respect of a particular act or law; it is possible to advise delay and caution. But the right itself cannot be allowed to be questioned. It is a birthright that cannot be surrendered without surrender of one's self-respect.

At the same time that the right of civil disobedience is insisted upon, its use must be guarded by all conceivable restrictions. Every possible provision should be made against an outbreak of violence or general lawlessness. Its area as well as its scope should also be limited to the barest necessity of the case. In the present case, therefore, aggressive civil disobedience should be confined to a vindication of the right of free speech and free association. In other words non-co-operation, so long as it remains non-violent, must be allowed to continue without let or hindrance. When that position is attained it is time for a representative conference to be summoned for the settlement of Khilafat, the Punjab and swaraj but not till then.

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66. TELEGRAM TO DEVDAS GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,
January 6, 1922

DEVDAS GANDHI
ANAND BHAWAN
ALLAHABAD

CONGRATULATION KRISHNA KANT[1] KHANNA SYED MOHIUDDIN AND GOVIND UPON THEIR GOOD FORTUNE.[2] HOPE STREAM VOLUNTEERS WILL REMAIN UNINTERRUPTED.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 7790

67. WELL DONE, BUT WILL THIS CONTINUE?

Gujarat can claim to have given an excellent account of itself.[3] Khadi tents were erected at a cost of three and a half lakhs, canopies constructed, electric lights installed, a picturesque exhibition was held, *bhajans* were sung and the splendour of Indian music demonstrated. Hindus and Muslims lived side by side. Not an angry word was uttered by either. Gujarati girls worked as volunteers, Gujarati youths served the delegates even by performing the tasks of scavengers; a huge meeting was held for women and speeches were delivered. All who spoke in the Congress *pandal* respected the law of economy and talked to the point. No one indulged in long harangues and an effective but moderately worded resolution was passed in answer to the policy of repression adopted by the Government.

No one doubts that by doing all this Gujarat has enhanced its prestige as also that of India. But what is to follow?

Nothing has been left undone to present a bold appearance nor have brave words been lacking; but will brave deeds follow? Will Gujaratis be able to compete with Bengal, U.P. and the Punjab? Will they win the credit of getting the prisoners released and

[1] Nephew of Madan Mohan Malaviya and editor of *Abhyudaya*

[2] *Vide* "My Notes", 8-1-1922, under the sub-titlte "Malaviyaji's Son".

[3] During the Congress session in Ahmedabad in December 1921

securing swaraj? Will they go to jail? Will they submit to beatings and face even death, without anger? If we understand things properly, this will be but child's play. If not, it will be as difficult as breaking boulders.

We must be non-violent in thought, word and deed. Even a *Bhangi* must be regarded as a brother. We must behave with consideration and love towards our Parsi, Jew and Christian brothers and also those who co-operate with the Government. Nor may we show anger to a British neighbour. We must scrupulously follow swadeshi. We must wear only khadi. It is our duty to go to jail, to take beatings, even to die, for the sake of truth—for following truth.

He who keeps this difficult vow will live though slain, and will give new life to his country. Many others have died, have had their heads broken or have gone to jail. They did not enhance India's prestige nor saved her. On the contrary, they brought her a bad name. India's ills will not be cured by the sufferings of criminals or their tears. The remedy for her malady lies in the sacrifice of the innocent.

Ravana carried away the chaste and devoted Sita and the demon kingdom was destroyed. Had he kidnapped a prostitute, the world would not today be remembering Ravana, adoring the prostitute. If a criminal is punished too severely, the world does not care. If, however, even the hair of an innocent person is touched, the world will not bear it.

But what did I see? One of the most respectable delegates from Gujarat got hold of another's ticket for attending as a visitor a meeting of the All-India Congress Committee.[1] This gentleman was caught and a volunteer brought him to me. I felt ashamed. I felt it would be better for me to run away from Gujarat. For a moment I was so shaken that I wondered if it was worth while struggling for swaraj. If this person goes to jail, how will the country benefit? I did not at that time regard this incident as unimportant, nor do I do so now. Even one small sore on the body can prove fatal. Even a minute amount of arsenic falling into fifty maunds of milk renders the latter useless. If fresh milk comes into contact with filth, we throw it away.

Gujaratis, whether you are men or women, take heed. Do not in a moment lose all that you have won. This fight has no use for untruth. There can be no hypocrisy or deceit here. Your

[1] It seems he was a delegate to the plenary session of the Congress but had not been elected a member of the All-India Congress Committee.

responsibility is great. This fight can be won only by humility, civility, courage, charity, and purity in thought, word and deed.

Those who are impure may stay away. There is dirt in Gujarat as there is elsewhere in the world. But impurity cannot be permitted to mingle with purity. Those who cannot adhere to truth may—they must—stand aside; those who cannot speak the truth should remain dumb. In time even their habit of thinking unworthy thoughts will leave them, for they will have no reason to do so. What need was there to attend the meeting with another's ticket? What was there to see?

Murmurings continually reach my ears that the conditions are too difficult. But there is absolutely nothing new in them.

What we planned and decided upon at Nagpur and at Calcutta, and have reiterated in thousands of meetings, has now been incorporated in the pledge. Now that the time has come for us all to declare openly our intention, why are we upset? Were we all these days merely deceiving people by saying that we meant to win swaraj by truth, by love, by removing the blot of untouchability and by self-sacrifice? Or, did we imagine that these conditions were for others and not for us?

I hope that no thoughtful Gujarati man or woman will fail to enter his or her name in this holy *yajna*[1]. It does not matter if Bardoli or Anand is not ready. Neither will find it possible to hold back. Individual civil disobedience, however, we can undertake even today. I am sure there are persons in every town and village who are ready for this. They should now fill the jails.

Personally, I wish that as long as Gujaratis have not gone to jail, there should be no settlement and no non-co-operator serving sentences of imprisonment should be released. While, however, cherishing this unkind wish, I assume that one who has voluntarily courted imprisonment will not wish to be released till the goal has been reached, and to see it reached it is absolutely necessary that we go through a good deal of suffering. If Gujarat does not go through this suffering, which other province will? The way to reduce the suffering to the minimum is for the best men and women to take upon themselves the largest share of it. I, therefore, appeal to every Gujarati man and woman to read and understand the pledge to be taken by every volunteer and sign it. Hav-

[1] Sacrifice

ing done so, they should avail themselves of the many harmless ways of courting imprisonment which are open to them.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 8-1-1922

68. KHILAFAT CONFERENCE

The Khilafat Conference and Muslim League meet generally at the same time as the Congress. This enables Hindus and Muslims to learn a great deal from each other and to strengthen their friendship. A person like me who has faith in God cannot but see His hand behind the fact that the President of the Khilafat Conference also happened to be the President of the Congress. Deshbandhu's arrest has done greater service than his attending the Congress would have done and Hakimji, being free, accepted the burden of Congress presidentship in addition to that of the presidentship of the Khilafat Conference and thereby strengthened Hindu-Muslim unity. The Khilafat camp and the Congress camp thus came so close to each other that nobody would think of them as separate camps.

For similar reasons, it was suggested by Shri Abbas Tyabji that there was no longer any need for the Muslim League to continue as a separate body. When Hindus and Muslims were becoming united in heart, where was the need for two separate political bodies? So long as they were fighting with each other for their respective rights, there may have been such a need. Now the Khilafat Committee should be sufficient. It should, of course, continue, as it is connected with religion.

There is, thus, a perfectly genuine and convincing reason for the view that the Muslim League should be wound up. Yet, so long as Muslim opinion has not crystallized in favour of this course, it will be safe not to propose dissolution of the Muslim League.

I have written about the discussions in the Khilafat Conference and the Muslim League on the question of severing the British connection in any event.[1] It is, therefore, unnecessary to say more here. I prefer to write about the daily increasing amity between the two communities which I observed during the Khilafat Conference

[1] Gandhiji attended the Khilafat Conference on December 27 and the Muslim League session on December 30.

and the Muslim League session. The impressive spectacle of large numbers of Muslims on the dais in Congress meetings and of Hindus in the Khilafat Conference and the sessions of the Muslim League freely taking part in the proceedings is a memory worth treasuring by all.

Though Hindu-Muslim relations are thus improving, we are not free from dangers. There still remain in our paths many deserts to be crossed, many forests, valleys and hills. The road has yet to be cleared, metalled and rolled. It is still very necessary to employ all possible means to promote this unity. These are now widely known to all. They are:

1. to share each other's joys and sorrows,
2. to respect each other's feelings,
3. to shed fear of each other, and
4. to pay special attention to tasks in which the interests of both parties are involved.

The Khilafat has shown us the way to fulfil the first requirement.

By refraining from interfering in each other's religious observances, Hindus and Muslims can display mutual regard.

The fact that the Hindus are in a majority should not frighten the Muslims and the Hindus should rid themselves of the fear that, with the help of other Muslim nations, Indian Muslims will suppress the Hindus.

Swadeshi and spinning involve the interests of both. If Hindus and Muslims equally realize their significance and benefit, unity between them would be very much strengthened.

But the best method of strengthening it, is for both Hindus and Muslims to take it upon themselves to protect the minority communities. They should love and respect Parsis, Christians and Jews, protect them and never so much as dream of harassing them or forcing them to do anything. In this way, protecting and serving them will become a tradition among Hindus and Muslims and, in the measure that the spirit of service grows among us, we shall become more united.

A person becomes worthy of others' regard in the measure he does his duty. One who is always seeking his rights does not attend to his duties and eventually comes to be regarded as a tyrant who thinks only of his rights. We are fighting the Government because it recognizes only its own rights and does not so much as consider its duty towards us.

If Hindus and Muslims attempt to pose as patrons or benefactors of each other, they will certainly end up as enemies. If, on

the other hand, they regard themselves as each other's servants, the bond of mutual regard will grow stronger day by day and a time will come when nothing can break it. Fire will not burn it nor will water dissolve it. Only when such a wonderful bond has been forged between the two communities will the flower of freedom bloom in all its beauty. When this happens, arguments, such as whether we should strive for complete independence or maintain our connection with the British, whether we should fight with the sword or win our freedom by peaceful means, will become superfluous. When this auspicious moment arrives, we shall only have to ask and we shall receive. It is, therefore, the sacred duty of all of us—Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Christians, Jews—to stop worrying about the future and to strive for improving conditions in the present. May God help us all to do this!

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-1-1922

69. MY NOTES

Awakening Among Christians

I have noted that non-co-operation has brought about a great awakening among Christians too. A conference representing all the Christians in the country was held a short time ago in Lahore under the presidentship of Mr. Mukerji. Very good resolutions regarding swadeshi and prohibition were adopted at the Conference. The swaraj-spirit can be felt in all their proceedings. Speakers dwelt at length on the need for adopting khadi. Everyone has realized now that khadi is the poor man's life-line and that the spinning-wheel means prosperity in the poor man's home, and so Indian Christians have also embraced the movement. Although the President spoke against non-co-operation, he, too, wants swaraj. In his speech, he strongly criticized the Government's repressive policies.

The Prince of Wales in Indian States

A question has arisen what the subjects of Indian States should do when the Prince visits their States. It seems to me that, since they have not started non-co-operation against their rulers, they may not do anything which might embarrass the State. They are not bound to honour a guest of the State, but at the same time they are not entitled to agitate against such a guest being honoured. When, therefore, the Prince visits an Indian State, the public should

not declare a hartal or hold a protest meeting. Thoughtful subjects of these States, however, are sure to feel bound up with the rest of the country and, therefore, they should as far as possible refrain from taking part in functions held in honour of the Prince. In the States, there is very little democracy, in fact none at all. The public there does not have to associate itself with the actions of the ruler. People join only in activities which interest them or under compulsion. In all such matters, therefore, a person will be admired for courteously exercising his freedom as an individual. In Indian States, the relationship between the ruler and the ruled is governed entirely by self-interest. If the ruler is a good man, he can do some good; if he is a bad man, the subjects have no appeal against him other than to take up arms or offer non-co-operation. This seems to be the state of relations between the rulers and the ruled in British India, where the Government acts in disregard of the people's interests and, as a result, non-co-operation has been launched. The condition of the Indian States is at present so difficult that it would be a serious matter for their subjects to start non-co-operation. Such a step can be taken only where oppression has become intolerable and the subjects have developed collective soul-force.

Some Questions

I am asked so many questions that if I attempted to answer them all, I would have time for nothing else. I, therefore, answer only those which seem to me important. There is, however, an anonymous letter containing questions which I shall consider, not because of their importance, but because they illustrate the ignorance which still prevails among the people. My object is to enlighten even such people.

Q. What are you going to do with swaraj?

A. I am working myself to secure what I want; what the people want, however, they alone can secure.

Q. What are you going to do with the money you have collected?

A. The various Provincial Committees are utilizing it. I have no right to use even a pie of it. The accounts of the Fund have already been published.

Q. Who will rule under swaraj after your death?

A. Swaraj means one's own rule. Everyone has to rule over himself. When all have learnt to rule over themselves, then it will be rule by all, by the people. My living or dying is irrelevant to the issue. I am merely a physician.

Q. Why do you write in English?

A. Because I want to spend all that I have in the service of the country.

Q. Why do you travel by train?

A. That is the Government's kindness and I avail myself of it to further my own work.

Q. You want people to wear khadi, but it is dear.

A. Foreign cloth is costly even if you get it free and khadi is cheap even if it costs more, because all the money spent on the latter goes into the homes of the poor in the country. Moreover, khadi lasts longer and the simplicity that goes with the use of khadi influences other aspects of life and its fragrance makes public life clean and wholesome.

Q. Why do you play with people's lives?

A. I do nothing of the kind. People come forward to sacrifice their lives for their country or their religion because this gives them joy.

Q. Why do your co-workers wear boots and European clothes?

A. This merely illustrates my consideration for others. I wish to maintain friendship with them and show, with love, that neither European clothes nor boots are necessary in India.

Q. Why do you interfere in matters of religion?

A. I do not interfere in anyone's religion. Nor are people so simple, either, that they would allow me to do so. But I try to place before them those principles which are common to all religions and I intend to go on doing so.

Lest They Go with the Wind!

The strong wind of peaceful non-co-operation is delightful and stimulating, but we must take care that khadi is not carried away or yarn does not fly away in this wind. Those who are engaged in propagating khadi must certainly register their names as volunteers, but they must not neglect spinning or khadi either. They need not come forward to court arrest. They are to act as watchmen. These latter come out when the need for protection arises; otherwise they remain engaged in their own work. Those who have been working for propagating swadeshi ought not to get arrested except for spinning, or selling khadi. Of course, if the number of others going to jail from among those doing other work is insufficient and the swadeshi workers come to their aid, it will be

a different matter. The true soldier is he who dies at his post. Death while doing one's appointed task ensures one's welfare, whereas attempting to do another's duties is fraught with danger.[1]

The Khadi Pledge

It is indeed surprising that of all the conditions in the pledge which the Congress has prescribed for the volunteers, the one requiring the use of khadi is felt to be the most exacting. As a matter of fact, one would expect that the condition of non-violence even in thought or even when one is assaulted would be regarded as more difficult. If, however, the condition of wearing khadi is felt to be difficult, the reason must be that when we break this rule we know that we do so and the fact of our having broken it is immediately observed by others as well, so that one cannot in this matter deceive either oneself or others. My advice is that we should show as much vigilance in all the conditions as we are obliged to do in regard to khadi. The meaning of the condition about khadi in the pledge has not been clearly understood. But it can have only one meaning. It can apply only to the clothes we wear. One should certainly discard foreign or mill-made cloth from our bedding, etc., but this is not made obligatory in the pledge as there are difficulties in the way of immediate self-purification to this extent. For many, such a step may even be beyond their means. Once, however, we have made this change-over in regard to the clothes we wear, it is unlikely that, for other purposes in the home, we would continue to use mill-made or foreign cloth in preference to khadi. It is not at all difficult now to use khadi for one's clothes. If a man is very poor, he may limit himself to a loin-cloth but this should be of khadi.

One more question has been raised in this matter, viz., is khadi to be worn by volunteers only when on duty or at all times? As long as one's name stands in the list of volunteers, having taken the pledge one must wear khadi at all times, in private and in public.

Brave Mother

During the Congress week, I received a letter from the mother of Shri Govindji Vasanji Mithaiwala, but at the time I could not use it in *Navajivan*. Some of the facts of this case have appeared in newspapers but I do not wish to discuss them here. A gentleman has replied to certain statements made in the court by Shri Govind-

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, III.35

ji's mother. I do not wish to comment on this either. I wish exclusively to draw attention to the heroism of the late Sakarbai which shone out during the hearing of the case. She went bravely to the police; in the court, too, she stood near her son in the dock and protected him so that he might not yield to weakness. Shri Govindji has always lived in luxury. His wound was not yet healed; he has had no experience of the hardships of jail-life. His friends had tried to get him released on bail and to persuade him to allow himself to be defended, telling him that this was an individual case and had no political significance. Sakarbai stood near the dock in order to protect her son against all these dangers and to uphold the truth. She herself refused to get Shri Govindji released on bail. This lady knew that one who takes a pledge of non-co-operation may not defend himself in court, whether the charge against him is true or false, whether the case is public or private. In order, therefore, to see that this pledge was honoured, she mustered courage to attend the court. News of similar instances has come from other places also. Help and courage are being offered in various ways by mother to son, sister to brother, wife to husband. It is in this firmness and courage that I glimpse the coming of freedom. Women and men are at present bringing glory to India not by their learning but by their truth and heroism.

Another Illustration

Shri Mahadev Desai's wife is in Allahabad. She is herself a volunteer, goes out to work, cooks for and feeds other volunteers and helps them in other ways and spins regularly. Immediately after Mahadev Desai was arrested, she wrote a letter to me which would bring gladness to any reader. I, therefore, reproduce it here:[1]

She has of course my blessings, but who am I to bless? Indian women are developing heroism with their own *tapascharya*. It is not as if only one or two men have gone to jail. Large numbers of them have gone and their wives are keeping up courage; they willingly let their husbands and other relatives court arrest and are ready to go to jail themselves. A wire has just come to say that the ill treatment of Shri Desai has now stopped. Jail is bound to mean suffering, though unnecessary suffering can be averted by courage and courteous behaviour on our part. But, whether it is thus averted or not, and however severe the hardships of jail-life, we must brace ourselves to bear them.

[1] The letter is not translated here. She assured Gandhiji that her husband's arrest had not at all made her unhappy.

MALAVIYAJI'S SON

Malaviyaji's youngest son, named Govind, and his nephew Krishna Kant Malaviya were arrested some time earlier, fined and released. The son has been arrested again for making a speech and has been given one and a half years' hard labour. I regard this as India's good fortune. That Malaviyaji's son should go to jail for non-co-operation reminds one of our ancient religious traditions. Shri Govind spared no effort to obtain Panditji's permission. As long as he could, he respected his revered father's wishes. The father, too, on his part, gave his son full freedom. When, after the arrest of Pandit Jawaharlal and others, Govind could no longer restrain himself, he wrote a very courteous letter to his father and joined the freedom fight. I know that there has not been the slightest diminution in Govind's devotion towards his father. I am sure that Panditji, too, is not angry with Govind for his action. The relationship between father and son remains as affectionate as ever and will always remain so. Thus, in this *swaraj-yajna*, people have learnt to obey their conscience and we see father and son in different camps. All these are signs of spiritual awakening—of swaraj.

DEVOTEES IN JAIL

Different from this case of Govind, though equally uplifting, is the lesson we get from the incarceration of Prof. [J. B.] Kripalani in a Banaras jail. His nephew writes:[1]

GUJARAT'S GOOD FORTUNE

The dispute regarding the schools in Nadiad, Surat and Ahmedabad will provide an opportunity to people to court imprisonment and the residents of Godhra have, so to say, the Ganga flowing by their doorstep. Processions have been banned there for two months. This period expires on the 17th. During the intervening period, therefore, the people of Godhra have a chance to fill the jails, on condition that they remain peaceful and fulfil the other requirements of the pledge. The Magistrate's notice is as follows:[2]

This ban on hymns and innocent national songs cannot be tolerated. I hope that in situations of this kind the Provincial Committee will give permission to the towns or talukas for indi-

[1] The letter is not translated here. The nephew had received a letter from J. B. Kripalani saying that he had kept up in jail the daily routine of the Ashram.

[2] Not translated here

vidual civil disobedience and that Gujarat will make a start and exhibit her capacity for sacrifice.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-1-1922

70. *TELEGRAM TO ESTHER MENON*[1]

SABARMATI,
January 11, 1922

GOD BLESS YOU BOTH.

GANDHI

From the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child*, p. 74

71. *NOTES*

Too Optimistic

C. Rajagopalachari is an accurate student of satyagraha. He began to follow it when it was first commenced in South Africa. In my opinion, he knows the science of satyagraha as no one else perhaps does. And he has tried to live up to it for years. When, therefore, the opportunity for going to jail came to him, he embraced it without a second thought. He felt that although he was guiding the movement in Madras in his own unassuming manner, he would serve and guide it better being in prison. The reader will, therefore, appreciate the optimism underlying the following from him written immediately on receiving the sentence of three months' simple imprisonment:

> Three months' simple is all too little, but if swaraj is won by you earlier it makes no difference. I hope when I come back, you will have finished the swaraj work and got back to your normal occupation of research in dietetics.

Whilst I feel that swaraj has already come in a sense (and that is an important sense), the extraordinary situation that has arisen will not permit me quite so soon to revert to my favourite

[1] *Nee* Esther Faering, a Danish missionary whom Gandhiji treated as his daughter. She came to India in 1916 and later joined Sabarmati Ashram.

This telegram was evidently sent after her marriage with Dr. Menon and their return from Denmark. The Menons were then helping Miss Petersen with her school and Ashram at Porto Novo.

"normal occupation of research in dietetics". This letter was written on the 21st ultimo, as I have said, just after the sentence. The following long letter was written the same day but before the sentence:

> I have your note enclosing draft resolutions.
>
> I am not in favour of including in the resolution the claim that we have achieved swaraj in substance though not in form. I understand the meaning of the claim, but feel that it should rather go into your writings than become part of the resolutions of Congress.
>
> I do not see any specific resolution sanctioning in express terms mass or individual civil disobedience. I think it would be necessary and desirable to have a clear resolution on the subject. As the resolutions are drafted, there is only one form of civil disobedience sanctioned, viz., disobeying the volunteer organizations prohibition. I fear this prohibition may be removed or at least slackened; and there are other forms of disobedience handy such as orders under S.144. I, therefore, suggest that after the resolution about volunteer organizations, we should have a resolution sanctioning civil disobedience in such form and with such limitations as may from time to time be issued by the Working Committee or yourself.
>
> I have no idea what results the pressure of "constitutionalist" visitors will have on the proceedings of Congress. But I press on you my view that no negotiations should be undertaken now nor till we have advanced a bit further in the civil disobedience struggle. The Ali Brothers, Das, Lalaji and Panditji should have a voice not only in the negotiations but also in fixing the time when we should enter truce. Moreover, a conference of the Government and Congress should be the only machinery. Congress should nominate the non-official leaders of all parties. Congress, not Government, should nominate Moderate leaders. We are always corrupted by Government nomination. I am positive that there should be no resolution of Congress in this session referring to or anticipating any negotiations. We may have a special session, if necessary, later.
>
> I do not like the idea, some people have, that we should now wrangle over and divert the attention and energy of the country to questions of what form of government and what constitution should be put forward as our claim for India. This question may be taken up when we are nearing the end of the struggle.
>
> Some people are talking of parallel Government. I have never discussed this with you and therefore have to venture an opinion without sufficient examination. I do not think it physically possible to have a parallel Government. As long as there is a Government running on the basis of violence, we cannot have a parallel Government without counter-

violence. On the basis of non-violence we can only work up non-co-operation or civil disobedience, not run a parallel, positive set of institutions beyond a very limited extent. The method of non-violence can, as the world now stands, only take up a negative and destructive attitude and follow it up with a new Government but not run a contemporaneous parallel Government as the Irish are supposed to have done. If I have not expressed myself clearly do not worry about it. I referred to the subject as I believe some may press a resolution on the subject.

I do not know when we shall next meet or under what circumstances. But I feel I am realizing the object of my life as I am approaching the prison.

The following was written on the 20th ultimo:

I am feeling more and more strongly every day that the truce and negotiations have been forced a little too early. I wish you could find some way to put them off till we won a few more battles. Government would like very much to negotiate at once, because necessarily our terms would be less than what they would be after a month. And our Moderate friends are too eager to enter now; they see we are not terror-struck and must win, and they out of their incorrigible weakness wish to end the strife before it should get severer, and there is so much competition among them for a good idea, that it gets to be premature. Government is shrewd. They have seen their error and realized that we won't be bullied. So they are quietly retracing. Madras Government have definitely declared they won't declare associations unlawful and so also Bihar and Orissa Governments.

Government now see that the Moderates have deserted them. But it should stop there, till the thing gets a bit more mature. The Prince must go back and then in February we should think of settlement after Gujarat has given an account of itself. It is absurd in any case that people should talk of conferences when Nehruji and Das and Lalaji are in prison. They should fix the time for the armistice.

The Moplahs are now going in 3rd class compartments with only bars in the windows. We see constables giving water and even running about for it at some stations. The crucifixion of the seventy has not been in vain. Thousands of Moplahs have since had human treatment.

I have been giving the letters received from imprisoned workers for they demonstrate, as nothing else can, the fierce nature of the struggle as also the grim determination of the people. Rajagopalachari's reflections on the resolutions have, the reader will notice, been mostly anticipated. His advice not to mention in the central resolution anything about a settlement has much to be said

in its favour. Weak as we have been and possibly still are, there is need for us not to divert our attention from the path of suffering. Yet I feel that the mention in the manner made in the resolution was inevitable. We must know and confess our weakness and we must act, too, in anticipation of becoming strong. I should not be surprised if we have many truces and settlements and several abortions before we come to the end. A true soldier takes life and things philosophically. He is unattached to results. His is to work with all his might, treating suffering and rest alike. His rest is but a preparation for greater suffering if need be. We must develop the faculty of suffering without the atmosphere of excitement. Voluntary suffering being a new experience, there is a feeling that if the excitement of the moment subsides, we may not respond to a fresh dose of repression, whereas permanent readiness to suffer is an essential condition of swaraj. Does not England provide for a permanent armament in order to keep herself immune from attack? No doubt it is mad, it is suicidal and it amounts to a denial of God and His justice. But she cannot do otherwise so long as she considers it necessary to impose her commerce and to prey upon other nations. She wishes to be feared by the nations of the earth and has to pay heavily for it. India, I hope, wishes to be loved by them and, therefore, must depend upon perpetual readiness to suffer for her freedom. We have involuntarily suffered so long that it is difficult for us even to imagine that we can do without it. Let us transmute the unwillingness into willingness to suffer and we are protected against a combination of all the nations of the earth. Anyway that is the course India has chosen, and as soon as it becomes an established fact that our capacity to suffer has become normal, we are altogether a free nation. When we have attained that state we shall approach conferences and settlements without misgiving and with perfect equanimity.

Rajagopalachari's reference to the now human treatment of Moplah prisoners has a lesson for us. Many of us will have to die before we are free from our prolonged political asphyxiation which is worse than the physical asphyxiation of Moplahs although it so shocked our humanitarian instinct. The Moplahs who died in that death wagon will not have to answer before God for unmanliness, if they were, as many must have been, innocent prisoners. Not so with us who knowingly and weakly submit to political degradation. I trust that the Moderate friends who see Rajagopalachari's letters will not mind his friendly hits at them. The letters were not meant for publication. They were naturally written without

reserve which publicity imposes on a writer. But I have hoped that the Moderate friends will not misunderstand Rajagopalachari. There is no denying the fact that there is today a temperamental difference between co-operating Moderates and non-co-operating Extremists. The latter impute timidity to the former rather than faithlessness to the country. Both are well-wishers and servants of the country. It is open to the Moderates to consider Extremists to be rash and even reckless. We must be able to stand such honest criticism without feeling irritated or offended.

"ALREADY FREE"

The readers of *Young India* are not unfamiliar with Mr. W. W. Pearson's[1] name. He has been associated with Dr. Tagore's work at Shantiniketan for several years. He was deported for having written a pro-nationalist book on India. He has recently been permitted to return to his work at Shantiniketan from where he sent through Mr. Andrews the following message during the Congress week. After a personal reference he wrote:[2]

> I want also to add something of a more public nature which may be used publicly or not at the Congress. . .It is this:
>
> . . . Your work has borne its fruit, for India is already free. . .
>
> But at the same time, although complete and unconditional swaraj is assured, I would urge the adoption of some practical constructive programme of social service . . .
>
> The Irish Agricultural Organization Society will, I am convinced, be the firm foundation on which the structure of Irish freedom can be built. India also will need such a basis on which can be constructed a free and independent State and for this an immediate programme of practical swaraj is an essential condition.

I share Mr. Pearson's view that India is "already free". She became free when Lalaji, Pandit Nehru, Chitta Ranjan Das and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad were arrested. She became free as soon as it became clear that repression had fallen flat and that the people were not to be deterred from forming associations and holding public meetings even though they were assaulted and flogged. Freedom was ours when we were ready to pay the price for it. The settlement of our differences with the administrators is a matter of time. We cannot be said to be free so long as we need a certificate of freedom. He is not healthy, who has need to prove his health by producing a health certificate. Every man and

1 A Christian missionary and an active supporter of Indians

2 Only excerpts reproduced here

woman who visited the Congress *pandal* felt in his or her own person the glow of freedom.

Whilst Mr. Pearson has noticed in the Indian air the electricity of freedom, he misses the constructive side of the movement. The spirit of freedom is like the leaven all-pervading. The constructive work which gives the movement stability cannot be felt. It has to be observed by seeing the work that is silently but surely going on in thousands of homes. He will find it in swadeshi, in the spinning-wheel. India will be permanently organized to the extent that hand-spinning is organized. India's joint family system which affects even Mussulmans and her other special characteristics make further and immediate agricultural organization impossible. The small holdings daily getting smaller, the custom of vivisecting farms must ever make mere agriculture in spite of improvements a poor remedy for driving away her poverty. But the restoration of the spinning-wheel to its ancient status at once supplies the felt want and automatically provides for the natural increase in families. It defies the pranks of the monsoons and constitutes a general insurance against many risks. It gives the country an incentive to industrial effort and renders co-operation on a national scale absolutely necessary for success. The khadi movement is revolutionizing the village life and putting hope into millions of human breasts. No wonder Dr. Roy[1], in order to accelerate the charkha movement, it is reported in the Calcutta Press, went to his native village, Katipara, and

> exhorted everybody to take to spinning during leisure hours, for, according to him, the charkha would prove the salvation of the country. With great emphasis he said that his heart's desire would be fulfilled if, within a period of six months, the villagers could clothe themselves with clothes spun and woven by themselves.

CONGRESSMEN BEWARE!

Whilst on the khadi movement, I would like to warn Congress Committees or Khilafat Committees against relaxation of effort in the matter of swadeshi. Concentration on civil disobedience must mean double zeal for swadeshi. Civil disobedience without swadeshi is death without hope of creation. It is like tearing down a field without any prospect of sowing a new crop. Civil disobedience should mean an added incentive to the khadi movement. All the women, old men, the children who are not imprisoned, must devote their spare energy, every available minute,

[1] Dr. P. C. Ray

to the work of manufacturing yarn and khadi and of spreading it among others. My faith is as bright as ever that perfect swadeshi leads automatically to swaraj. Swadeshi is to the nation what personal purity is to the individual.

THE "TIMES" TESTIMONY

In its trade supplement of 10th December, the writer of the trade notes dealing with the cotton trade depression says:[1]

> The depression in the cotton trade is quite unrelieved. . . . Lancashire's patience, courage and confidence are being sorely tried.
>
> A more important consideration for the cotton trade is that the agreement among the merchant dealers in Calcutta not to buy imported cloth is coming to an end. While there has been much talk about the boycott continuing until February and later, the period to which the compact actually applied ends with the close of the year, and there seems to be little probability of the prohibition continuing beyond that date. . . . In any case, as far as is known, there is no proposal before Calcutta to renew the prohibition. With this particular feature of the Gandhi movement out of the way, it seems practically certain that there will be a revival in trade with India. . . . and if India comes in even for modest quantities of goods, other markets are likely to follow.

I wish it were possible to hold out any hope whatsoever of the prospect pictured by the writer materializing. Swadeshi is not a temporary programme. It is coeval with swaraj. The khadi hand-spun and hand-woven must be religiously the covering for India. Boycott of foreign cloth is not a measure of punishment, it is a measure of purification and permanent relief. It cannot be exchanged for swaraj. The latter is rather dependent upon the former. Pressure on England there is by means of swadeshi. But if England became totally indifferent about the khadi movement, it would still have to continue. In so far as Lancashire depends upon the Indian market for its piece-goods trade, it will have to revise its programme. No consideration can possibly induce India to remain idle and pauper for the sake of Lancashire or any other interest. If all goes well and if England and India are to become and remain friends and partners at will, as I hope and wish they will, there are plenty of other things England can sell to India and the latter can profitably receive from the former. Cloth she may not receive from anyone whether friend or foe. An India, regenerate, well-to-do and free, will furnish a better market to England and

[1] Only excerpts reproduced here

to the world than an India groaning under the heels of English and other exploiters.

IN GOD'S HANDS

Though the letter from Badadada[1] and the one from an English missionary have a personal touch about them, they are so important that I cannot resist the temptation of putting them before the public. Badadada's letters I always regard in the nature of blessings for me. It is a matter of great consolation to me that at this time of life he takes such lively interest in the struggle and gives it his blessings. The letter[2] published in this issue besides blessing the movement solves a spiritual difficulty that must have perplexed many an earnest seeker. A reformer having to deal with measures and men as they are must take risks and is bound to accept acts performed even from expedience. Hence the necessity of acts being always morally sound. Honesty from policy is as acceptable as honesty for its own sake. But dishonesty is unacceptable even though it may be actuated by excellent motives. A good motive increases the value of a good act. But a good act done even from a bad motive does not lose all its value. It is at least good for the world. The doer alone is the loser because having a bad motive he deprives himself of the share in the merit of his own act. In the matter of non-violence, then, all that we need to guard against is pretence of non-violence for the sake of covering violence.

"An English missionary" is a well-known worker in missionary circles. She has kindly sent her name as well as her address. The transparent honesty of the writer and the frank confession made by her show the English residents of India the way to peace.[3] I have no doubt that if only non-co-operators remain true to their pledge of non-violence to the end in spite of the greatest provocation, every Englishman and Englishwoman in India will become a full nationalist. Non-co-operation with our own humiliation by Englishmen must lead eventually to co-operation in friendship with them. The events that are happening just now show clearly how untenable the existing state is.

[1] Dwijendranath Tagore; eldest brother of Rabindranath Tagore; affectionately called "Borodada"

[2] Not reproduced here

[3] In her letter, not reproduced here, she had expressed admiration for Gandhiji and sympathized with the cause of Indian nationalism, deploring the "culpable blindness and misunderstanding of many of my people."

But the charm of both the letters is in each writer from his or her own standpoint recognizing the hand of God in the movement. I am painfully aware of the fact that during the late War both the English and the Germans claimed God to be on their side. I do not yet know that the German defeat is a test of God's desertion of them or that the English victory betokens God's grace. God's ways are inscrutable. He often tests His favourites through defeats and manifold tribulations. I accept, therefore, their estimate because the struggle is being admittedly conducted for a right cause and by means that are at least professedly and in the case of many non-co-operators certainly non-violent. Non-violence assumes entire reliance upon God. I should certainly lose my head, if I were to arrogate to myself the credit for the wonderful manifestation of courage, purity and truth. But it becomes easily explicable if we believe that God is guiding the movement and is using poor things like me as instruments in His hands.

HUNTED

Mr. Manilal Doctor's[1] case to which Mr. Banarasidas Chaturvedi[2] draws attention in these columns is a remarkable instance of how a man can be hunted down in the "great" British Empire for holding an opinion. Because the Fiji Government have reported against him although nothing has been proved against him in a court of law, he has been denied residence and practice in New Zealand, Australia, Singapore and now Ceylon. So far as the public is aware Mr. Manilal's crime is that he has served his countrymen and has been exercising potent influence over them. The Fiji Government has been challenged by Mr. Manilal to prove a case against him, but it has been too cowardly to do so and too mean even to maintain him after depriving him of the means of livelihood. This secret maligning of men is one of the worst features of the Empire system, betraying its weakness rather than strength. An Empire that requires such calculated persecution of a man without even offering to prove anything against him deserves

[1] Barrister and son-in-law of Gandhiji's old associate, Dr. Pranjivan Mehta. For several years he fought for the cause of Indians in Mauritius. In 1912, he went to Fiji from where he was deported without trial in 1920. Subsequently, he was refused permission to practise law in New Zealand and Australia. In Singapore, he was disallowed residence. On his way back from New Zealand, he was denied permission to practise in the Supreme Court of Ceylon and was ordered by the Governor to quit by January 9, 1921.

[2] (b. 1892); Member of Parliament, journalist and Hindi writer; resigned from Chief's College, Indore, in 1920 and joined C. F. Andrews at Shantiniketan; co-author of *Charles Freer Andrews, A Biography*

only to be dissolved. Be it remembered that Mr. Manilal Doctor is a barrister of many years' standing. People are used to thinking that lawyers can at least protect themselves against persecution. Well, the lawyers of none of the places where Mr. Manilal has tried to establish himself have even attempted to protect one of their own profession. Indeed the Law Society and the Court in New Zealand actually conspired to keep Mr. Manilal Doctor out of his practice.

THE MALAVIYAS

The most remarkable feature in the remarkable non-co-operation struggle is the fact that it has divided families. And of all such instances none is so striking as the division in the Malaviya family. It furnishes, in my opinion, an object-lesson to India in toleration and civil disobedience. Pandit Malaviyaji's toleration is really beyond compare. I know that he is against seeking imprisonment. I know, too, that if he believed in it, he is not the person to shirk it. I should not be surprised to find him, when the agony has reached white heat and when his faith in British justice is completely gone like mine, to be the foremost in seeking imprisonment. But whilst he is himself against the course of civil disobedience for the present, he has never interfered with the choice of even those who are nearest to him and over whom he has unquestioned authority by right of love and eldership. On the contrary he has left even his own sons absolutely free to do as they please. To me the instance of Govind's civil disobedience is one to treasure. Panditji tried hard to wean that brave boy in his own gentle and sweet manner. Govind tried his very best to carry out what he knew to be his father's wish up to the last moment. He prayed for light. He was torn by conflict of duties. The arrests of the Nehrus proved too strong for the young man. And invoking the blessings of his great and great-hearted father, he decided to throw himself into the struggle, and the jails of India probably hold no more joyous heart than Govind Malaviya's. I make bold to say that he has by his act of civil disobedience proved as dutiful to his father as he has been dutiful to his country. Govind's act is a pattern for our time in dutiful civil disobedience of children. There is, I am sure, no gulf between father and son. Probably Malaviyaji is prouder of his son Govind now than he was before the latter's decision to seek imprisonment. It is truthful acts like these which prove to me the religious nature of the struggle. I cannot resist the temptation of quoting Govind's courageous statement[1] before the court.

[1] Not reproduced here

I invite the reader to join me in congratulating both the father and the son. The country has every reason to be proud of both, and where youths show the courage that Govind has shown, the result of the struggle is a certainty.

LALAJI'S LETTER

At last the trial of Lala Lajapat Rai, Pandit Santanam, Malek Lalkhan and Dr. Gopichand is over. Lalaji and Pandit Santanam have eighteen months each and Malek Lalkhan and Dr. Gopichand sixteen months each.[1] The conviction was a certainty notwithstanding the farce of forcing on the distinguished prisoners a counsel for their defence even in the teeth of their protest. Just before the sentence was pronounced Lalaji was able to send me the following cheerful note:[2]

> Very many thanks for your affectionate note and the message. . . I never went on hunger strike because I am opposed to any fuss for the sake of comfort. . . . I am engaged in compiling the History of India, Hindu Period, for the use of national schools and national colleges. Santanam is making very good use of his time by studying Sanskrit and religious books. I had been informed of what was done at Ahmedabad and about the Round Table Conference. Please do not be influenced by our "troubles" in arriving at any decision about principles. Rest assured we are prepared to suffer for any length of time and in every way to achieve what we desire. Now that we are in for it, we should see it through.

Let us hope that Lalaji and Pandit Santanam will be permitted to continue their studies. I would venture to suggest to him and his comrades that they copy the example of Messrs Shaukat Ali and Rajagopalachari and their companions and add the spinning-wheel to their literary pursuits. I promise that both the History of Lalaji and the Sanskrit studies of Pandit Santanam will in no way suffer for the change of occupation.

I commend Lalaji's reference to the proposed Round Table Conference to those public men who, actuated by the finest instinct in man, are trying to hasten a settlement for the purpose of securing the discharge of the prisoners who are in jail for the crime of loving their country and obeying the voice of conscience. We may put no obstacles in the way of an honourable settlement, but we would be unjust to the imprisoned patriots if out of consideration for their bodily comforts, we were hustled into an unsatis-

[1] Lajpat Rai and Santanam were sentenced on January 7, 1921.

[2] Only excerpts reproduced here

factory peace. We would not read correctly the temper of the country if we yielded unjustifiably a tittle for the sake of minimizing self-invited sufferings.

A CORRECTION

Shrimati Urmila Devi sends the following correction from Calcutta which I gladly publish:

> As I find a few mistakes in the printed interview in *Young India* arising out of the fact that it was given in a hurry and your representative consequently missed a few points, I would request you to publish the following corrections in *Young India*:
>
> 1. In answer to the question as to what I thought of the present general situation in Bengal I said:
>
> It is marvellous. Bengal has come to her own now. During the last session of the A.I.C.C. meeting in Delhi, I was sad because I felt that Bengal was not responding fully to the swadeshi programme and consequently was not in a position to lead this movement. I always want Bengal to lead in every movement. Now I have not the least apprehension, for, I feel that Bengal is leading now.
>
> 2. In answer to the question as to the cause of the present outburst in Bengal, I said:
>
> The illegal order of the Government is the general cause. The arrests of ladies and leaders have given a great impetus to Bengal.

AN INSTRUCTIVE TABLE

By the courtesy of the Secretary of the Reception Committee I am able to give the following table showing the number of delegates who attended the Congress and their composition:

NUMBER OF DELEGATES

No.	*Name of Province*	*No. of delegates under the Constitution*	*Actual Arrivals*
1.	Andhra	360	383[*sic*]
2.	Kerala	160	33
3.	Maharashtra	292	263
4.	Karnatak	320	304
5.	Gujarat	185	185
6.	Bombay	18	17
7.	Burma	100	56
8.	Punjab and N.W.F.	540	518
9.	Sind	71	63
10.	Delhi	100	92
11.	Rajputana	400	399

12.	Utkal	300	108
13.	C.P. (Marathi)	50	44
14.	Assam	63	17
15.	Berar	61	58
16.	Madras	410	162
17.	Bengal	986	373
18.	United Provinces	960	888
19.	C.P. (Hindustani)	209	205
20.	Bihar	588	558
		6,173	4,726

ANALYSIS OF THE ATTENDANCE

No.	*Ladies*	*Mussulmans*	*Parsis*	*Sikhs*	*Antyajas*	*The rest*
1.	8	10				365
2.		1				32
3.	1	9				253
4.	9	29				266
5.	11	22	5		2	145
6.	3	2				15
7.		2				51
8.	17	67		54		380
9.	1	11				51
10.	7	13		4		68
11.	11	13				375
12.		3				105
13.	1	5				38
14.		2				15
15.	2	5				5
16.	2	13				147
17.	10	36		4		323
18.	10	114		3		761
19.	6	29				170
20.	7	83				468
	106	469	5	65	2	4,079 [*sic*]

It will be noticed that out of the total permissible (6,173) as many as 4,726 attended the Congress. Hitherto the number has been swelled by local delegates who could under the old constitution become delegates for the asking by simply paying Rs. 10. This time not even Pandit Malaviyaji could be regarded as a delegate because he was not elected. The actual attendance of

4,726 was, therefore, a fine record. That the United Provinces and Bengal, in spite of so many arrests, could have sent 888 and 373 respectively and the far off Assam should have sent 17 and Utkal 108, shows the keen interest that is being taken in the National Assembly. No less remarkable is the attendance of 106 lady delegates representing almost all the provinces. The attendance of 65 Sikh delegates must also be regarded as altogether remarkable. Hardly few [*sic*] Sikhs attended two years ago. But now that community is everywhere pushing itself forward in all national movements. The number of 469 Mussulman delegates is a good number, but we must not be satisfied till we have got the full quota which must be more than 1,200. I am sure that there were more than 2 "untouchable" delegates. I cannot imagine the Punjab and the Andhra provinces not sending any such delegates. The presence of 5 Parsi delegates is, of course, beyond their numerical proportion which is 2. The Parsis, as I have so often remarked, have in proportion to their numbers occupied the foremost place whether in point of sacrifice, attendance, ability or generosity. I know, as a matter of fact, that there were at least two Christians. And of course, if Messrs Stokes and George Joseph had been free, they would have attended. But it is up to the Hindus and the Mussulmans to go out of their way to induce a more general interest in the movement on the part of the Christian community.

VISITORS

If the attendance of delegates was most satisfactory, that of visitors was not less so. The troubled state of the country scared away the richest men, and so not a single ticket for Rs. 5,000 each was taken up. 21, however, paid Rs. 1,000 each, 20 paid Rs. 500 each, 162 Rs. 100 each, 81 Rs. 50 each and 1,686 Rs. 25 each, making a total of Rs. 93,400 in receipts. The Reception Committee contributed more than its quota. The total strength was filled up, the receipts being Rs. 78,625. 11,261 season tickets of Rs. 3 each were issued permitting attendance everywhere at the Congress sessions. 64,469 four-anna tickets were issued. As I have already remarked the issue of season and entrance tickets had to be stopped owing to the great rush. Altogether Rs. 2,49,527 were received by the Reception Committee in various fees.

ALL-INDIA CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE

This Conference held under the presidency of Mr. Mukerji was striking for the interest it evinced in the political life of the country. From the President down to the ordinary delegate,

there was insistence on the necessity of Indian Christians sharing the national awakening.

> We must demonstrate by words and deeds that Christianity has made us neither un-Indian nor un-national. Can it be for a moment conceived that we as a community shall dissociate ourselves from our brethren, Hindus and Mussulmans, whatever differences there may be in our religious convictions?,

says Professor S. C. Mukerji. The Conference adopted sixteen resolutions touching almost every phase of national life. It condemned the repressive measures, urged withdrawal of Government notifications and discharge of prisoners, it advised non-co-operators to suspend the campaign of non-co-operation, urged a round table conference, approved of total prohibition, sympathized with the Indians beyond the seas. I must give the full text of the swadeshi resolution showing as it does the extent to which the spirit of swadeshi has touched the Indian Christian mind:

> This Conference is strongly of opinion that a true swadeshi spirit should dominate every sphere of Indian Christian life which would, in its turn, serve to give a real impetus to all indigenous enterprises in the country. That as an expression of our swadeshi spirit we must forthwith start wearing clothes of Indian manufacture. In view of the fact that the Indian Christian community has been very frequently and severely accused of lacking the swadeshi spirit, this Conference recommends that all Provincial Leagues make strenuous efforts to find ways and means of inculcating the swadeshi spirit in the Indian Christians through the local leagues and lose no time in putting such a programme into effect.

All this is very encouraging. I hope that the resolution will be followed up by corresponding action and that charkha and khadi will be as popular among the Indian Christians as they have become among the Hindus and Mussulmans. It remains for the Hindus and Mussulmans to cherish the response of the Conference and make it a point to cultivate the friendliest relations with the Christian countrymen.

More Notable Arrests

News of arrests continue to pour in from all sides. Shyam Babu's[1] pen will no more adorn the columns of the *Servant*. He has been imprisoned because he will not recognize the authority of the court by giving evidence as a witness. The Congress resolution neither requires one to go to that length nor prevents one

[1] Shyam Sunder Chakravarty

from so doing. Shyam Babu has chosen the more unbending attitude. Having got the chance of joining the workers in the Calcutta prisons, he would not miss it. The readers of the *Servant* which established for itself a stable reputation within two years of its inauguration in the face of great difficulties will miss his directing hand. But I have no doubt that Shyam Babu is better serving the country by being in jail. His example of suffering is a more powerful editorial than what even his able pen could produce.

Karnatak has been honoured with the imprisonment of Mr. Majli who took Mr. Deshpande's place in Belgaum. For his parting message he has reproduced the late Mr. Hume's words, "What avail your wealth, your learning, Empty titles, sordid trade? True self-rule were worth them all, Nations by themselves are made." Mr. Majli was asked to furnish security to be of *good behaviour*. As he did not know that he was guilty of bad behaviour, he refused to furnish security and preferred to go where persons of good behaviour find today their true shelter. Mr. Majli wants to be discharged from prison only by a free India and prays to all to wear pure khadi, the emblem of pure and liberated India, and discard foreign clothes, the emblem of foreign yoke.

For default similar to Mr. Majli's, Dr. B. Subramaniam, Secretary, Andhra Provincial Congress Committee, has been sentenced to one year's rigorous imprisonment at Cocanada.

THE GURDWARA MOVEMENT

The latest *communique* from the Sikh Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee shows that the Commissioner offered to return the Keys of the Golden Temple at Amritsar upon certain conditions. To this belated offer the following spirited reply was sent by Sardar Bhagat Jaswant Singh. After acknowledging the official communication he says:

> I have the honour to draw your attention to the following resolution passed by the S.G.P. Committee on the 6th December 1921:
>
> Resolved that no Sikh should agree to any arrangement about the restoration of the Keys of the Golden Temple, unless and until all the Sikhs arrested in connection with the Keys affair are released unconditionally.
>
> I am, therefore, instructed to inform you that the Committee cannot avail itself of the proffered temporary and conditional restoration of Keys, unaccompanied by the unconditional release of all the Sikhs arrested in connection with the Keys affair.

The Sikh *communique* appends the following pertinent observations to the foregoing:

From the above correspondence it is clear that the Government has got no objection now to handing over the Keys of the Durbar Saheb to the Shiromani Committee temporarily, pending the decision of the civil suit regarding the Golden Temple. Could not the Government have adopted this very attitude from the beginning? While the Keys remained with the Gurdwara Committee, the Government could at the same time have pleased itself by carrying on its civil suit in which, of course, as now the Gurdwara Committee would have taken no part. Where was the necessity of creating so much heart-burning by taking away the Keys forcibly and arresting hundreds of Sikhs for protesting against high-handed action the futility of which the Government now tacitly admits?

Apologizing

It is reported from Allahabad that "eight accused under the Criminal Law Amendment Act were released on tendering apology and regretting the joining of illegal associations and unseemly and foolish agitations"! Having known what happened only a few months ago in Mathura, I distrust this message. In Mathura, sham non-co-operators were arrested and were made to apologize; and then it was claimed on behalf of the authorities that non-co-operators had apologized. But whilst I distrust the message, I would like workers to profit by it. We need not be surprised if, when large bodies of young men are daily being imprisoned, some of them weaken and retrace their steps, especially if the treatment even temporarily is anything like what was given to Mahadev Desai.[1] It is better for us to be satisfied with fewer imprisonments rather than that we should have weak persons offering themselves under the impulse of the moment and then succumbing.

About Lawyers

The Jamnalal Bajaj[2] fund of one lac of rupees that was given last year for the support of lawyers who had suspended practice as a result of the Nagpur resolution[3] is nearly, as it was intended to be, exhausted. The lawyers cannot go back to practice with any show of decency, and I am sure that many will not countenance even the idea of a return when the country is showing such a wonderful example of self-sacrifice. But it would not be proper

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 5-1-1922, under the sub-title "Jail Treatment".

[2] 1889-1942; merchant, banker, social worker and philanthropist; devoted follower of Gandhiji; served as Treasurer of the Congress for many years

[3] On non-co-operation adopted at the Nagpur Congress in 1920

to leave the lawyers to their own resources. I would, therefore, certainly suggest to the Provincial Committees that they should take up the burden subject to assistance from the central fund, if it was at all found necessary. The rearrangement should be quickly made so as to avoid suspense and delay in the even tenor of national work.

This, however, is the least among the difficulties that surround the lawyer class at the present moment. They are eager to take part in the national awakening. The spirit is willing, the flesh is weak. I still feel that practising lawyers cannot lead. They cannot but weaken a movement which demands complete, almost reckless, sacrifice. The whole cause can be lost if top men weaken at a supreme crisis. But the Congress has purposely opened an honourable door for them. The original draft was perhaps uncertain as to any but full non-co-operators being entitled to sign the volunteer pledge. The conditions for them are easy of fulfilment, being mostly matters of belief. The use of khadi may cause some little inconvenience at first but I feel sure that they will not mind it, if otherwise they believe in the requirements of the pledge. And as among non-co-operators imprisonment covers a multitude of defects, practising lawyers who go through the fire of imprisonment will by that one fact come to occupy the position of honour which once was theirs. There is also the general resolution appealing to and inviting all including full co-operators to take up such activities as do not admit of any sacrifice or any difference of opinion. I hope, therefore, that lawyers will to the best of their ability and opportunity respond to the country's call in many of the various ways open to them. Where all are expected to help none should be found wanting or indifferent. Non-co-operators on their part instead of priding themselves upon their achievements should be humble enough to receive all the aid that might be rendered to the country's cause. The spirit of toleration should take the place of intoleration and exclusiveness. It can do no credit to the movement or good to the cause if a man who has nothing or little to sacrifice claims by reason of his putting on khadi the right of slighting practising lawyers or others who may be honestly and according to their lights serving the country in various ways. Whatever is offered upon the altar of service to the motherland with a willing heart must be thankfully received.

DISTRESS WARRANTS

Inquiries are being made in several places as to what should be done in cases where fines are imposed and distress warrants

issued for recovery. One finds a readiness to suffer imprisonment and assaults but not loss of goods. The anomaly is at first sight difficult to understand but it is really easy to appreciate. We are so much tied down to our goods and other possessions that when no disgrace attaches to imprisonment, we prefer the inconvenience to loss of property. But we must perceive that we will lose a winning game if we are not prepared to sacrifice our earthly possessions as well as bodily ease for the sake of it. In an ill-managed State, a man with conscience pawns to it his goods, all other wealth, and his body and sets his conscience free. This struggle, therefore, can give us victory only if we become indifferent to everything through which the State can press us into subjection to its will. We must be prepared, therefore, to let our goods and our land be taken away from us and rejoice over the dispossession even as we rejoice today over imprisonments. We may rest assured that the Government will be more quickly tired of selling our chattels than it is already of taking charge of our bodies. And if we are sure, as we must be, of winning full swaraj before long, we must have faith enough to know that all the land that can be taken away will return to us intact and the best part even of money. When Belgium was overrun by the Germans, the Belgians knew that they would return to their own lands so long as they retained the will to suffer for the restoration of their property. The late General Botha[1] was a fugitive from his own rich possessions including hundreds of acres of land and finest cattle in South Africa. He did not count the cost, put up a fine fight and became virtually the crowned king of South Africa and had all his property returned to him with honour. We may not do less than the Boers and the Belgians especially as ours is a struggle in which we are pledged to make all sacrifice and exact none. We must voluntarily though temporarily embrace poverty if we will banish pauperism and pariahdom from the land. The sacrifice of the ease by a few of us is nothing compared to the reward which is in store for us, viz., the restoration of the honour and prosperity of this holy land.

Young India, 12-1-1922

1 1862-1919; Boer general and statesman; Prime Minister of the Transvaal, 1907, and of South African Union, 1910-19

72. *NEXT IS GUNPOWDER*

The reader will peruse with careful attention the informing resume[1] by K. of the new type of repression that is fast coming into vogue. It is possible that there is exaggeration in the details but almost all the reports hitherto received from non-co-operation quarters have proved so accurate and the denials so false that I am not disposed to discount the graphic details collected by K. from the correspondence received by me and from the newspapers.

The police are mostly our own countrymen but it is evident that they are being incited to become lawless by the example and the precept of their superior officers. When a mob becomes unruly, it knows no better; when the police become unruly, their action is deliberate and unpardonable. The mob frenzy can be controlled, the police frenzy spells disaster for an unprepared people. We have groaned under it all these long years. Thank God, India is today prepared to meet the ordered frenzy of the Government.

We must tear down the mask of the so-called enforcement of the ordinary law against so-called intimidators and we must invite and welcome honest martial law. O'Dwyerism[2] and Dyerism[3] are honest ideals, be they ever so indefensible. But what is going on in India today is indescribable hypocrisy.

If it is true that under the cover of distress warrants the police have entered our homes in Banaras and taken away ornaments even from the inmates, if it is true that in Bulandshahr under the pretence of preserving order they have entered people's homes in order to assault them, if it is true that they have stripped prisoners almost naked in order to execute distress warrants, the case is complete for the fiercest civil disobedience of the most aggressive type consistently with the preservation of non-violence on our side. We must not wait for gunpowder to be used upon helpless people nor can we afford to put an undue strain upon the people's patience by merely remaining on the defensive and letting the Government agents pillage and plunder our homes. We must draw the gunpowder on our own heads and that too at the earliest possible opportunity. We, the principal workers, cannot

[1] Not reproduced here

[2] & [3] The repression practised by Sir Michael O'Dwyer, Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, and General Dyer during the Punjab disorders of 1919

afford to watch with philosophic calmness these exasperating criminal assaults upon inoffensive people although they are volunteers and have, therefore, undertaken to suffer.

The shooting of a Mussulman youth by a European "youth" (are European youths armed?) for the crime of wearing or selling (whichever it was) a khadi cap, cannot be passed by in silence. We must avenge the wrong if necessary by inviting the shooting on our own heads.

The Government want to goad us into violence or abject submission. We must do neither. We must retort by such civil disobedience as would compel shooting.

They want civil war. We must not play into their hands. Here is what I call open canvassing for civil war. The Magistrate of Aligarh is responsible for the following circular[1] to the *raises*[2] of the Aligarh District:

> As you are doubtless aware the Khilafat and Congress Volunteers have been declared by the Local Government to be illegal associations and orders have been received for their suppressions. . . .
>
> The number of police at my disposal is limited and I am very reluctant to ask for military assistance. . . .
>
> I am, therefore, writing to a number of the leading *raises* and gentlemen of the District to ask for their assistance. . . .I would ask you kindly to select 50 of your retainers and tenants, stout able-bodied men, whom you could send in, on receiving a message that they are required for enrolment as special police.
>
> A present it is only necessary that selection of the men should be made and list prepared of their names and residence. . . .

We must refuse the bait by letting the gullible *raises* do as they like. We must seek only such forms of civil disobedience as would prevent any clash with our own people, whether turned into civil guard or still laymen. Given unflinching courage and preservation of complete non-violence, the fight can be brought to a victorious end inside of a month. May God grant India light and courage.

I had hoped that the pledge to face death was a distant event. Evidently God wills that we must be tested thoroughly and well. In His name was the battle begun. He must give us the strength to go through it.

Young India, 12-1-1922

[1] Only excerpts reproduced here

[2] Men of property

73. DESHBANDHU'S ADDRESS[1]

I must apologize to the public for the delay in issuing Deshbandhu Das's presidential address. It was received by me in a fragmentary condition with instructions to revise it and put it in shape. The reader will be glad to learn that beyond restoring one sentence which had been ruled out and adding one to complete a thought and beyond slight verbal immaterial alterations, the address is being printed as received. I see from the sentences ruled out in the original that Deshbandhu's intention was to give a review of the year's work and his considered opinion in detail on non-co-operation. But sufficient appears in the printed text to enable us to know his opinion. We know it, too, from his emphatic and stirring messages to the country just before he was silenced. In appreciating the address the reader will be helped to know that it was prepared just before his arrest. The reader will not fail to note the marked self-restraint with which the address is prepared as also the fact that Deshbandhu believes in non-violence as his final creed. That the only use the Government has for such a man is to put him in prison is about the greatest condemnation it can pronounce upon itself.

Young India, 12-1-1922

74. LIBERTY OF THE PRESS

One by one the pretensions of the Government that the reforms[2] represent more liberty and more concession to popular feeling are dropping out under the stress of circumstances. The pretensions can be justified only if they can stand the test under a severe strain. Liberty of speech means that it is unassailed even when the speech hurts; liberty of the Press can be said to be truly respected only when the Press can comment in the severest terms upon and even misrepresent matters, protection against misrepresentation or violence being secured not by an administrative gagging order, not by closing down the Press but by punishing the real offender,

[1] Owing to his arrest, C. R. Das could not deliver his presidential address at the Congress session at Ahmedabad in December, 1921; it was subsequently published in *Young India* with this prefatory note by Gandhiji.

[2] The Montford Reforms of 1919

leaving the Press itself unrestricted. Freedom of association is truly respected when assemblies of people can discuss even revolutionary projects, the State relying upon the force of public opinion and the civil police, not the savage military at its disposal, to crush any actual outbreak of revolution that is designed to confound public opinion and the State representing it.

The Government of India is now seeking to crush the three powerful vehicles of expressing and cultivating public opinion and is thus once more, but happily for the last time, proving its totally arbitrary and despotic character. The fight for swaraj, the Khilafat, the Punjab means fight for this threefold freedom before all else.

The *Independent* is no longer a printed sheet. The *Democrat* is no more. And now the sword has descended upon the *Pratap* and the *Kesari* of Lahore. The *Vande Mataram*, Lalaji's child, has warded off the blow by depositing Rs. 2,000 as security. The other two have had their first security forfeited and are now given ten days' notice to deposit Rs. 10,000 each or close down. I hope that the security of Rs. 10,000 will be refused.

I assume that what is happening in the United Provinces and the Punjab will happen in the others in due course unless the infection is prevented from spreading by some action on the part of the public.

In the first place I would urge the editors of the papers in question to copy the method of the *Independent* and publish their views in writing. I believe that an editor who has anything worth saying and who commands a clientele cannot be easily hushed so long as his body is left free. He has delivered his finished message as soon as he is put under duress. The Lokamanya spoke more eloquently from the Mandalay fortress than through the columns of the printed *Kesari*. His influence was multiplied a thousandfold by his incarceration and his speech and his pen had acquired much greater power after he was discharged than before his imprisonment. By his death he is editing his paper without pen and speech through the sacred resolution of the people to realize his life's dream. He could not possibly have done more if he were today in the flesh preaching his *mantra*[1]. Critics like me would perhaps be still finding fault with this expression of his or that. Today all criticism is hushed and his *mantra* alone rules millions of hearts which are determined to raise a permanent living memorial by the fulfilment of his *mantra* in their lives.

[1] Literally, a sacred verse

Therefore, let us first break the idol of machinery and leaden type. The pen is our foundry and the hands of willing copyists our printing machine. Idolatry is permissible in Hinduism when it subserves an ideal. It becomes a sinful fetish when the idol itself becomes the ideal. Let us use the machine and the type whilst we can, to give unfettered expression to our thoughts. But let us not feel helpless when they are taken away from us by a "paternal" Government watching and controlling every combination of types and every movement of the printing machine.

But the handwritten newspaper is, I admit, a heroic remedy meant for heroic times. By being indifferent to the aid of the printing room and the compositor's stick we ensure their free retention or restoration for all time.

We must do something more. We must apply civil disobedience for the restoration of that right before we think of what we call larger things. The restoration of free speech, free association and free Press is almost the whole swaraj. I would, therefore, respectfully urge the conference[1] that is meeting on Saturday next[2] at the instance of Pandit Malaviyaji and other distinguished sons of India to concentrate upon the removal of these obstacles on which all can heartily join than upon the Khilafat, the Punjab and swaraj. Let us take care of these precious pennies and that pound will take care of itself.

Young India, 12-1-1922

75. *INTERVIEW TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"*

[Before *January 14, 1922*]

Mahatma Gandhi who has expressed his readiness to attend the Conference, interviewed by our representative, stated that there was no budging from the position that had been taken up by the Congress regarding the Round Table Conference and the conditions[3] that he had defined in the Congress Subjects Committee as precedent to any such conference must be satisfied by Government before the Congress could be expected to fall in with the idea. So far as he was concerned, his object in accepting the invitation, said Mahatmaji, was to see if he could bring round his Moderate friends on the narrow issue which he had presented to the readers of *Young India* last

[1] Of leaders of all parties

[2] January 14, at Bombay

[3] *Vide* "Speech at Subjects Committee Meeting, Ahmedabad", 28-12-1921.

week[1]—namely, the issue of freedom of speech and freedom of association. Mahatmaji hoped it would be possible to persuade his Moderate friends to see eye to eye with the Congress on that issue.

The Bombay Chronicle, 14-1-1922

76. SPEECH AT LEADERS' CONFERENCE, BOMBAY[2]

January 14, 1922

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya opened the proceedings . . . and requested Sir Sankaran Nair[3] to take the Speaker's chair. Sir Sankaran Nair then took the chair and called upon Mr. M. A. Jinnah[4] to place draft proposals on behalf of the conveners before the Conference for its consideration. After Mr. Jinnah had done this, the Speaker called upon Mr. Gandhi to open the discussion.

Mr. Gandhi began by thanking the conveners for bringing all parties together on a common platform and added that he was pining for an opportunity to lay bare his heart to his Moderate friends. He pointed out that so far as he was personally concerned, he was quite willing to attend any conference without making any conditions; but so far as the Congress and the non-co-operators were concerned, the position was different. Certain conditions which he outlined in his speech, including the release of political prisoners besides those imprisoned under the Criminal Law Amendment Act and the Seditious Meetings Act, must, he said, necessarily be fulfilled by the Government before the non-co-operators could accede to the proposal for a round table conference. He did not insist on the humiliation of anybody, not even General Dyer, but was only concerned to see that the Government went to the Round Table Conference in the true spirit of penitently undoing the harm which their action had caused.[5] He mentioned a long list of events which had caused great discontent in the country and added that unless

[1] *Vide* "The Immediate Issue", 5-1-1922.

[2] Published in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 18-1-1922, under the sub-title "Official Report of Proceedings". An earlier report appeared in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 16-1-1922, excerpts from which have been given in footnotes wherever necessary.

[3] 1857-1934; President, Indian National Congress, 1897; Judge of the Madras High Court; appointed member of the Viceroy's Executive Council in 1915

[4] 1876-1948; Muslim leader; founder and first Governor-General of Pakistan

[5] Here *The Bombay Chronicle*, 16-1-1922, has: "Mahatmaji mentioned a long list of Government's sins of omission and commission which had made the situation what it was today, which was worse than that under martial law. And he mentioned, as an illustration, the case of Sitamarhi in Bihar which had been saddled with punitive police. He asked the Conference if they realized what the stationing of punitive police meant, and as long as such things were hap-

these causes were removed and the harm undone, the Round Table Conference would not be held in the proper atmosphere of peace and harmony. In accepting the invitations to the Conference, he and his fellow non-co-operators wanted to prove their sympathy for the object of the Conference but beyond that he was of opinion that it would be fair to all sections who had met there that the non-co-operators should not be parties to the resolutions of the Conference, though he promised his co-operation in the deliberations of the Conference and his support on behalf of his party and, in particular, the Working Committee of the Congress in arriving at proper conclusions.

The Speaker then invited a general discussion in which Messrs S. R. Bomanji, J. A. Wadia, J. B. Petit, S. Srinivasa Iyengar, Sheshagiri Ayer, Satyamurti, Gokaran Nath Misra and Kunzru took part.

Mr. Gandhi in reply explained why the non-co-operators had not identified themselves with the resolutions of the Conference and also the reason why it was desirable for them to do so. He appealed to the Moderates and the Independents to form a link between the Government and the non-co-operators and added that the non-co-operators were willing to give them every help to make the work of the Conference a success.

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pening in the country by the express sanction of Government, the talk of a conference must be futile. Continuing, he regretfully acknowledged that some non-co-operators had been guilty of violence and he apologized to them all for such conduct. But barring such incidents which were few and far between, the progress made by the non-co-operation movement was quite satisfactory and he had no reason to be disappointed with the results already achieved. As regards the suffering voluntarily and cheerfully borne by his co-workers, Mahatmaji pointed out that not one of the sufferers had ever complained. There was Maulana Shaukat Ali who had lost 30 lbs. in weight during his incarceration but he had wanted to reduce his weight. Dr. Kitchlew wanted to gain in weight and he had gained, while Pandit Motilal Nehru had found the rest in jail which he had vainly looked for when free. As for Lala Lajpat Rai he was using his time in writing a text-book for national schools. So that, said Mahatma Gandhi, who adroitly gave a humorous turn to this portion of his speech, they had no reason to regret it at all.

"Proceeding Mahatmaji pointed out that in accepting the invitation to the Conference, the non-co-operators merely wanted to prove their sympathy for and with the conveners, but beyond it, they did not intend to be party to the passing of the resolutions by the present Conference. But that did not mean that they did not want to associate themselves in the effort to bring about an honourable settlement under a proper atmosphere. There was a wall between the N.C.O.'s and other parties. It could not be broken without the former surrendering a vital principle or by the latter joining them. A conference was not their goal, but a proper declaration of penitence on the part of the Government, and there could be no favourable atmosphere until the Government retraced their steps . . . ."

In the course of the debate, Mr. Gandhi spoke on behalf of the non-co-operators once more making clear his position as their leader with reference to the resolutions accepted by the Conference.[1]

The Bombay Chronicle, 18-1-1922

77. WOMEN OF GUJARAT

When Smt. Vasanti Devi Das, Urmila Devi Sen and Suniti Devi were arrested[2], some sisters from Ahmedabad decided to form a Volunteer Corps and court arrest. Consequently, forms of the pledge were placed before them. The first idea was to publish the list after fifty names had been enrolled. This happened before the Congress session.

Meanwhile, the Bengali ladies were released. The Government did not have the strength to hold them for long. In consequence, the publication of the Ahmedabad list was suspended, though signatures continued to be obtained. As a result of the effort, about 140 women signed up and more are following suit. Of these, three women have had some experience of jail in the past.

Of what consequence, however, are the signatures by themselves? What is of inestimable value is the firm determination which, we hope, has inspired them.

If, in this way, the signatures have value, the responsibility of those who have obtained them has also increased. And since I am the author of this idea, my responsibility is the greatest.

If it had been merely a matter of replacing one Government by another, I would never have advised women to come forward. I have seen that there is much sordid work in an effort to secure that. But, at the end of this struggle, we hope to establish *Ramarajya*[3] and the poor hope to get protection, women to live in safety and the starving millions to see an end of hunger. When the struggle ends, we hope to see the resurrection of the spinning-wheel, decrease in the poison of communal discord, eradication of the practice of untouchability so that the so-called untouchables may look forward to being treated as our brothers, the closing of the liquor shops and the disappearance of the drink-

[1] *The Bombay Chronicle*, 16-1-1922, has: "Before adjourning, the Conference appointed a Committee finally to settle the terms of the resolutions to be placed before the Conference today [January 15]."

[2] *Vide* "Women's Part", 15-12-1921.

[3] Rule of Rama, traditionally regarded as the ideal political and social order

habit, the preservation of the Khilafat and the protection of the cow, the healing of the Punjab wounds, the restoration of our traditional culture to its rightful place and the introduction, in every home, of the spinning-wheel to take its place along with the oven.

How can women stand aside from a movement which is inspired by such great hopes? I have, threrefore, been requesting women to come forward and take part in it. It is these hopes, I think, which have roused women throughout the country.

But should I, trusting to this enthusiasm, advise women to go to jail? I feel that I cannot do otherwise. If I did not encourage them to do so, that would be a reflection on my faith in them. A *yajna* is incomplete without women taking part in it. Fearlessness is just as essential for women as it is for men. I thought, therefore, that it would be good if women give their signatures and get used to the idea of going to jail. It also occurred to me that if women ceased being frightened by the thought of jail, it would be easier for men to court arrest.

But just as I have a responsibility, so also have these sisters who have made a beginning. Having given their signatures, they should start work. Women can picket liquor shops. Customers will surely be put to shame by their presence. If any women want to take up this work, they will have to carry wooden plates round their necks[1], like Abbas Saheb. They will also have to find out the homes of drink-addicts and persuade them to abstain. I would first suggest to the women that they should postpone the picketing of liquor shops for the present and start going round to sell khadi. Pure khadi is not available in all khadi shops. Moreover, those who have not so far thought about swadeshi will not go to these shops and will wear khadi only if it is taken to their doors. If women carry khadi with them, they can display it and thus tempt even those who wear foreign cloth or mill-made cloth to buy it. They should go from house to house and sell khadi. They should also keep a stock of khadi caps and sell these. As they go about doing this, they will lose their fear and the Government then will feel impelled to arrest them. As long as the work does not affect the Government's revenues nor increase the people's strength in any way, it will not arrest women. Besides, it will be more fitting if women think of going to jail after they have developed capacity for organized work.

I also hope that women will fulfil the conditions of the pledge they have taken. I believe that they will remain peaceful and

[1] *Vide* "Nadiad's Effort" in the succeeding item.

bear love for Hindus, Muslims and all others. But will they wear pure khadi even in their homes? Will they regard *Dheds*[1] and *Bhangis* as brothers? Will they stop giving left-over and rotten food to them and cease to regard themselves as defiled by contact with them? The women who have given their signatures belong to all communities. If these women can fulfil their pledge in its true spirit, then the 140 will soon become 1,400 and this number will rise to 14,00,000.

It is in this hope and faith that I give the sacred names of these women.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 15-1-1922

78. *MY NOTES*

Nadiad's Effort

It would appear that the efforts made at Nadiad by Abbas Saheb and his band to court arrest have been wasted. They carried wooden plates hung from their necks. This certainly made good show, but it did not help them to get arrested. And so they were disappointed. A satyagrahi must never lose hope. He keeps on trying and trusts in God. It is for Him to give the reward, and He gives it as and when He wills. There is no arbitrariness in His will. He never makes a mistake. There is always pure justice in what He wills. This Judge, therefore, gives to us what our efforts deserve.

One reward has been gained. That Abbas Saheb should go about carrying a wooden plate hung from his neck and inscribed with slogans, is no ordinary event. What a contrast between what he was then, a judge admonishing others, and what he is now, an ex-judge who, with a wooden plate hanging from his neck, had sallied forth with his comrades, determined to let himself be manhandled by the police!

The effect on the students will be an additional gain. Those who do not come round even after this will feel ashamed of themselves. Their parents will also start thinking. How can children attend schools of a Government which can, in broad daylight, force open our houses without even a warrant from a court? In such schools, they will merely receive instruction but learn nothing.

[1] A backward Hindu Community traditionally regarded as untouchable

That is much too heavy a fee to pay for mere instruction. Who will want to be educated at the cost of his self-respect and integrity?

Since those of us who go out for picketing remain courteous, our picketing is bound to have some results. Only those things which are intrinsically objectionable should be picketed, so that our action will be both morally justified and legitimate. As long as there is no coercion in our picketing we have the right to picket anything which public opinion condemns. We should not, however, exercise this right and start picketing all such items. Where there is a strong difference of opinion, picketing would be a form of coercion. Would it not annoy us if some article of which we approved but others disapproved was picketed? As a general rule, therefore, we should picket only those things against which public opinion has been educated fairly well. Personally, I am convinced that in Nadiad public opinion is opposed to Government schools. Where pupils have not been withdrawn from such schools, we have to take it that the parents are not in favour of such a step; and when the parents are not in favour, how can we say that public opinion is united behind non-co-operation?

Education is, of course, essential. A knowledge of letters is necessary, but it is not everything. It is not an end, it is only a means. What does it matter if one lacks knowledge of letters, provided one has understanding? The great teachers and reformers of the world were not men of letters. Had Christ or Mahomed any knowledge of letters? Yet the light which they gave and the service which they rendered, neither learned philosophers nor economists have done. President Kruger of the Boers knew only enough to enable him to sign his name with difficulty. The late Amir of Afghanistan had also no better education. But both these were men of profound wisdom.

Some may protest that I am referring to uncommon men. That is true. But I am using these illustrations to prove that a knowledge of letters is not indispensable. Even today a large part of humanity is illiterate, but that does not mean that they are bereft of understanding. We live because of them. With their simple understanding, they keep the wheels of society moving. My point is that, if our children remain without education during the freedom struggle, both they and society will benefit. Just as we would be wise to abandon for the time being any building in which poisonous gases had spread, so we shall profit if we abandon Government schools which are poisonous in their own way. Those parents who will not understand even this are probably not impatient for swaraj. The Government has forcibly taken over municipal

schools in Nadiad and, if we still send our children to these schools, then we deserve the treatment we have received. It was, therefore, right that Abbas Saheb and his comrades went about with wooden plates hanging from their necks.

PEOPLE'S SPIRIT

The spirit of the people of Surat, Ahmedabad and Nadiad is being tested. The municipalities in all these cities are non-co-operating in the matter of education.[1] In all three, the people's chosen representatives have, by a majority, nationalized the education being given by the municipality. The Government's action in taking possession of the school buildings cannot be tolerated.

It is for the people to see that this robbery perpetrated by the Government is not rewarded. If parents refuse to send their children to schools run in the name of the Government and teachers refuse to serve in them, the buildings forcibly taken over by it will remain empty and the funds which have been illegally confiscated will be returned. We must not get frightened by the Government's robbery but rest confident that we shall get back the buildings and the funds which the Government has taken over.

But, until then, what about the children? If the public is enlightened, we should be able to use the community buildings for teaching children; if even these are not available, we can teach them in open spaces, make them spin and sing hymns and teach them drill. In accordance with the Congress Resolution[2], most of the teachers should get ready to go to jail. We should, therefore, change the present system of education so that a minimum of teachers will be required. I would have no hesitation in handing over the children to the care of elderly women. They will, of course, be spinning; in addition, they will keep an eye on the pupils. If the latter have been taught good manners, they will be more respectful to these women and learn to be more courteous. The women, on their part, will be doing a service.

WOMEN'S CONTRIBUTION

Women must make their full contribution in this struggle. They served as volunteers and made the Congress session a great success. This was the first experiment of its kind in the history of the Congress. It is a matter of joy for Gujarat that this good fortune fell to its women. The experiment was a complete success

[1] *Vide* "Municipalities in Trouble", 15-12-1921 and "My Notes", 8-1-1922, under the sub-title "Gujarat's Good Fortune".

[2] Adopted at Ahmedabad in December 1921; *vide* "Speech at Congress Session, Ahmedabad–I", 28-12-1921.

and created a good impression on all. If women start contributing their share in every field of service which is safe for them, our capacity for work will be doubled.

We also know that the Government will not, as far as possible, arrest women. Men, of course, are to get themselves arrested. Women, therefore, will have to take over much of the men's work.

Need for Fearlessness

All that is needed for this purpose is fearlessness. Only those who are pure can possess it. Our minds have become so corrupt that we are always apprehensive about women's purity. In acting thus, we defame all people in the world. We regard woman as so weak that we think she is incapable of preserving her virtue, and man so fallen that his attitude towards woman can be only lustful. Both these notions are disgraceful. If our men and women are really what we think them to be, then we must confess that we are entirely unfit for swaraj. We have no reason to assume that Englishmen and women observe no restraints. Englishwomen do all kinds of work by way of service, whereas if we require a nurse, we find it difficult to get anyone who will do the work.

If swaraj is really drawing nearer, women will daily become more capable of protecting their honour. They must shed their fear. The notion that a woman is incapable of preserving her virtue is false. It is contrary to experience and a matter of shame for both men and women. There certainly are brutish men in the world who commit such crimes, but that man does not exist nor will he ever be born who can force himself upon a woman who values her chastity. It has, of course, to be admitted that not every woman possesses this spiritual strength and purity. We ourselves have brought this about. From the very start, we train our girls in such a way that they become incapable of protecting themselves. By the time the girl has become a woman, the false teaching has taken firm hold of her and she is convinced that a woman is utterly helpless before a man, whoever he may be. If, however, there is such a thing as truth and purity in the world, I wish to state categorically that woman has within her sufficient strength to preserve her chastity. The woman who calls upon Rama when in danger will surely be protected by Him. Which evil man will dare to approach a woman who is prepared to die? Her very eyes will shine with such light that any vicious man will be unnerved by it.

The power to die everyone has but few desire to use it. When someone wishes to dishonour a woman, when a man is in danger of being overmastered by lust, such a man and woman have a right

to commit suicide. It is indeed their duty to do so. Those who have the necessary strength of mind can do it with ease. Even in the grip of no matter how strong a person, any man or woman can kill himself or herself by biting off the tongue or, if the hands are free, by pressing the wind-pipe. If a person is prepared to risk death, no matter how securely he or she is tied,—tied to a tree—he can struggle himself free provided he does not mind broken bones. The strong overpower the weak because the latter cling to life and, therefore, do not resist to the point of death. A black ant sitting on a lump of jaggery will rather let its leg be broken than allow itself to be dragged away from it. If a child pulls very hard, its parents let go of its hand for fear that the arm may get dislocated. Every person has the strength necessary to let any limb of his be broken, but he cannot endure the resulting pain, the pain of dying. It is, however, the duty of every man or woman fighting for freedom to be ready to suffer this pain. If we pray to God daily for such strength, we shall surely receive it. I urge every sister to pray thus on arising every morning: "O God, keep me pure, give me strength to preserve my chastity, strength to preserve it even at the cost of my life. With Thee as my Protector, whom need I fear?" Such a prayer made with a pure mind will surely protect every woman.

But What about Men?

As I discuss this matter, I feel ashamed of being a man. Is man, who was born of woman, whose mother carried him for nine months, for whom she suffered pain, who slept only after putting him to sleep and ate only after she had fed him,—is man born an enemy of that mother's kind that they should live in fear of him? A woman does not run away from a tiger; she runs away only from man's lust. I have already pleaded with women. I wish to plead with men as well. Is not a man bound to remove the fears of women, of whom his mother was one? Should he not always pray: "Take my life before I cast lustful eyes upon any woman. If I ever incline to immorality, give me the strength to kill myself. Remove from me all uncleanliness so that no woman will fear me but will feel safe with me as with a brother"? I pray to God that, as long as our men are incapable of protecting our women, He should keep us in slavery. If in a country the men do not protect the women, they are not men at all and are fit only to remain slaves.

My Hope

But I am confident that in India both men and women know the limits they should observe. Both have tasted the sweetness of

purity. The girl volunteer whom I saw was without fear. I was filled with joy to see a girl standing fearlessly near the Ellis Bridge and selling khadi caps. Did she fear anyone? She knew that all men were her brothers. If one is good oneself, so is the world. The women who flocked in their thousands to the Congress *pandal* went there without fear. If, therefore, women refrain from taking part in activities which are safe for them, it will be because of men's selfishness or the women's laziness or ignorance. If a woman is not allowed freedom from household chores or if she wastes her time in decking herself up or in gossiping, what service can she do to her country?

Readiness to Die

In the fact that Abbas Saheb was not arrested in Nadiad, God's purpose may be that he who has known the sufferings of the Punjab and has often wept over them, cannot escape with mere imprisonment. Such a one can pass the test only by dying. It was Gujaratis who first passed the resolution of non-co-operation. How can imprisonment suffice for them? Their lot must be death. Can this possibly be the reason why God does not send Abbas Tyabji to jail?

To tell the truth, what fear has jail now for us? Does anyone mind the hardships of jail? The prisoners convey their view to me and tell me: "Do not, for our sakes, accept an unfavourable compromise. We are not impatient." We should not claim undeserved credit for braving dangers which have lost all terrors for us. There is no way for us but to go forward. The intermediary stage of receiving beatings is being cleared by the Punjab and it seems as if the country has left only death for us. I personally would wish it so. If India is required to conquer the fear of death as well, then may this burden fall upon Gujarat. Gujarat has enjoyed much praise. Death is not too great a price to pay for the honour of holding the Congress session here. And he who voluntarily meets death will ever rest in blessed sleep. Death is but a long sleep. Muslim and Christian friends believe that the dead shall rise again on the Day of Judgement. Hindus say that death is the passing from one body to another until finally one reaches the place where there is no sleep. All three believe that death is not complete annihilation. The test of one's faith in dharma comes at the moment of death. He who dies wailing, who does not want to die, descends into purgatory. Rather than die in this way, should we not go forth to meet death like a friend? It is beyond doubt that, if Gujaratis—Indians—shed the fear of death,

the fewest will actually have to meet it. We are slaves because we are afraid. If we could get rid of the fear of jail, of being beaten, of dying, of losing our property, then we would never want to kill, would never kill, a single human being. Thus readiness to die goes hand in hand with giving up the desire to kill. When we are ready to die, no one will be particularly eager to kill us. This is why the universe has been described as a wave in one's mind. If we wish to inspire fear in others, only then shall we ourselves have cause for fear; we may be killed only if we wish to kill others. Serpents bite us only because they fear us.

It is easy to say that one should shed the fear of death, but I know that it is not easy to shed it. I do not, therefore, expect that all Gujarati men and women will give up this fear in a moment. But I do earnestly hope that there are in Gujarat passionate lovers of swaraj who have discarded all fear of death and stand eager to embrace death for the sake of their country and their dharma. May their number increase, I pray, and may the time of our testing come soon.

Ready to Sacrifice Life, but Not Property

"We will go to jail, let ourselves be beaten, meet death, but will not sacrifice our property. Where has Congress made any mention of property?" So say some brave warriors who are ready to die but not to let go their land or allow their cattle or goods to be sold. The reference to the Congress is meaningless. It made no separate mention of property assuming that one who is ready to die will be ready to lose his all. But our attachment to property, movable and immovable, is such that even when giving up our life we are not willing to part with it! This is, therefore, a matter to which we must give some thought.

For terrorizing us, the Government will use every means which can bring us to our knees. If it discovers that we regard a fine as more of a hardship than imprisonment, it will impose fines. Already in some places imprisonment and fines are imposed simultaneously.

We must completely give up our fear of losing property. Under a tyrannical government, the rich also have to be partners in tyranny. Under such a government, therefore, poverty becomes the path of virtue. We should thus realize that, if we want to non-co-operate, we must give up all attachment to wealth. Only when we are ready to starve to death rather than submit to tyranny will our non-co-operation be complete.

It should also be noted that when large numbers have shed the fear of punishment by fine, it becomes difficult for the Go-

vernment to collect the amounts. It is far more troublesome to auction the property of a thousand people than to send them to jail. Punishment can be imposed only on a comparatively small number. When many people act in a particular way, it becomes almost impossible to stop them. Property may be confiscated, but to whom is it to be sold? Land may be taken over, but it cannot be picked up and put down somewhere else. Is there anyone who would be willing to bid for another's land?

Moreover, those who believe in swaraj should have faith in their expectation about the ultimate result. They should, therefore, have confidence that, even if their property is confiscated by the Government today, they will get it back when swaraj is won. General Botha owned thousands of acres. None possessed cattle like his. All this was seized by the British. But he did not yield. He held out with determination and, finally, not only did he regain his property but became the *de facto* king of the whole of South Africa. He was confident that, if he survived, he would get back his property and, if he died, he would go to heaven. We who do not wish to resort to violence in our struggle should be even more unconcerned about our property. The question will be asked how we can maintain ourselves if our property is seized by the Government. If we have taken the pledge not to yield even if we starve, why should we worry about ourselves or our people starving? In this large country there will always be someone to give us food, and, moreover, we have with us now our beloved spinning-wheel. Why, then, should we worry? When a whole family has become expert in spinning and weaving, its members do not have the slightest reason to worry about their livelihood.

All our fear arises from lack of faith. If we put our faith in God, that is, if we trust that everything will happen as ordained by Him, we would never worry. But it is only when we on our part have done our best that we can console ourselves with "whatever is to happen will happen". Man's efforts are assuredly rewarded by God's grace. Putting faith in God means that, even when our property is being seized, we continue to give Him our praise. If we praise Him in anticipation of our property being spared, that is only a bargain. God is not pining for bargains. He wants devotion and He severely tests the love of His devotee. He is as cruel as He is merciful. When He judges, He shows consideration to none. He shows no favour. He rewards both devotees and unbelievers according to their deserts. The devotee does good and receives the right reward. The bad man's actions are wicked and he gets his punishment.

In our struggle there is no room for hypocrisy, hatred or impatience. It is for this reason that it has been called a holy war. May Gujarat demonstrate religious spirit—I live in the confidence that she will.

The Purchaser Will Perish!

I hear that the Kheda District is pure only in name. The people there will not attack any Government employee but, should anyone come forward to bid for a *Patidar's* property which is being auctioned, he cannot hope to escape with his life. The *Patidar*, so proud of his blood, will not miss an opportunity to have his revenge. What sort of non-violence is this? Whoever buys our property automatically becomes a Government man. If so, how can we, having passed a resolution saying that no supporter of the Government should be injured, kill the person who buys our property? Moreover, our pledge makes no such exception. If *Patidars* or others compromise their pledge in this manner, be it only in thought, we cannot win swaraj. Our pledge is not that we will secure swaraj by any means, fair or foul. It is the general principle of the Congress, which is especially binding on non-co-operators, that it will fight for swaraj by peaceful and truthful means. It must not be forgotten that the conditions of truth and non-violence are binding on all who join the Congress. There are innumerable occasions in non-co-operation when people may get provoked and start fighting. That is why, by way of added precaution, the adjective "non-violent" has been joined to it. I, therefore, hope that *Patidars* and others who are anxious to save the honour of Gujarat will banish from their minds all evil thoughts and shed every fear.

Bardoli–Anand

These two talukas owe a special duty. If they do not quickly get ready, Gujarat will be put to shame. The Hindus and Muslims of U.P. and Bengal and the Hindus, Sikhs and Pathans of the Punjab have already passed the test of fearlessness, of readiness for imprisonment and ability to endure beating. If, now, Bardoli and Anand which have been much talked of do not get ready soon, we shall lose face. We are, of course, ready for imprisonment, but we have to make ourselves fit, and cultivate the strength, to lay down our lives. If we become fit, we shall get the necessary strength. All should start wearing khadi. The Committee has with it some sacred khadi which was used in Khadi Nagar. This should be used first, and afterwards only khadi produced in one's own

district should be worn. Women, too, should accept this common dharma. In every home people should work hard and spin strong, good quality yarn. Every village should take up carding, people should treat *Dheds* and *Bhangis* as brothers and serve them, admit their children to national schools and go personally to fetch them and show them kindness. They should also remove the fear of those in their midst who may be co-operating with the Government. Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, and Christians should cultivate good relations with one another. What is difficult in all this? What sacrifice does it involve? The spinning-wheel and khadi bring us money. The other things require abandoning our wrong ideas. That cannot be a burden. I want the people of Bardoli to labour day and night to qualify themselves and on the 20th at the latest send me an assurance, through their Secretary or President, or a written statement from either of them, that they are now fit and ready [for the campaign]. Similarly, the residents of Anand should by that date, or even earlier, send an assurance through Abbas Saheb.

If They Are True

If these friends are true and bold, they should stop paying revenue to the Government from today onwards. Those, at any rate, who have resolved to join the fight should stop doing so. I hope the residents of the taluka will not first pay up the revenue and then declare that they are ready to fight.

What about the Others?

Some people tell me that the whole of Gujarat is ready to suspend payment of revenue and ask me if I would not advise them to do so. I can give no such advice. I would not restrain anyone who voluntarily withholds payment. Who am I to compel him? But I would not take the risk of advising all the people to stop payment of revenue.

We seek to serve no interest of our own by refusing to pay it. Our refusal must be civil. If we wish to disobey the revenue law civilly, it is essential that we purify ourselves. Hence, those who regard unity of Hindus, Muslims, Christians and Parsis as a moral obligation, who have understood the significance of non-violence, who treat *Dheds* and *Bhangis* as brothers and do not think themselves defiled by their touch, who wear khadi exclusively and have the courage to die and to let their property be confiscated, these may certainly withhold payment without seeking my advice.

This, however, refers to individuals. I can never advise the whole population to withhold payment so long as the slightest

need remains to educate the people further. The main reason for this is that I am not convinced that people in all the talukas of Gujarat are ready to the extent that they will not give way to anger when their properties are auctioned on their withholding payment. It is, therefore, wiser to advise the general mass of people to pay. If any of them still refuse to pay, they may do as they choose. Those who pay may help in any other way they can. All people in the rest of the country will be paying revenue and will not, by doing so, have betrayed the cause. We shall seek their help in many other ways. I have, therefore, two different courses to advise:

1. If Bardoli and Anand want to offer mass civil disobedience, the people in these talukas should withhold payment even if, in consequence, *Inami* lands[1] are taken over by the Government.
2. To the people in the remaining talukas, my advice is that they should pay up the revenue dues but help the non-co-operation movement in other ways.

Those who, despite this advice, withhold payment on their own responsibility, having firmly resolved to abide by all the conditions of the pledge, will deserve our congratulations. But they must not be puffed up with pride, thinking that they have displayed great courage and the rest have been timid. Believing that everyone serves according to his capacity, even those who make heavy sacrifices should remain humble and come forward to give even more.

SHRI MAHADEV'S LETTER

I reproduce below a letter from Shri Mahadev Desai, leaving out only the salutation and the signature.[2] I believe that the posting of the letter was a breach of jail discipline. In South Africa, I refused even to act upon such letters, but in this case I feel that Mahadev Desai's harmless breach of a rule is pardonable. There is no other way to expose in time the Dyerism being practised in jails. If anyone suffers for this indiscipline, it will be Mahadev himself. I will not mind if he, too, like Lakshminarayan, is flogged till he gets sores on the back. Mahadev did right in taking this risk and writing. If any time the Govern-

[1] Lands held under privileged tenure

[2] The letter, not reproduced here, described the maltreatment, including flogging, of political prisoners, and mentioned particularly two volunteers, Kailash Nath and Lakshminarayan, who had been flogged.

ment gives the slightest latitude to prisoners, they may put it to good use as Mahadev has done in writing this letter. I do not at present wish to comment upon the facts given in it. At the moment, I am simply bathing in a sea of joy and amazement at the courage and restraint displayed by the country. I had not hoped for this degree of self-purification. The prisoners shouted cries of victory, not in a spirit of defiance but because they believed that they had a right to do so. When Mahadev drew Lakshminarayan's attention to the error, how candidly did he admit it at once? Truly, God's hand is behind our struggle.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 15-1-1922

79. *EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR*[1]

Sunday Morning [January 15, 1922][2]

I got your note just when I was in the thick of a meeting. I have now got up early to reply to your note and to frame resolutions for the 10 o'clock meeting.[3]

I have taken the insult offered to you as I have taken the insults offered to me by Mr. Patel[4] not once but on many occasions. It has become second nature with him. I had really come to think that you and he had, somehow or other, become the best of friends. Now, if you permit me, I should like to show your letter to Mr. Patel for his own good. I take it, you know, that he and I frankly do not agree. His way is not my way. He knows that we travel in different directions, so much for Mr. Patel.

I have no party save that of Truth. I want to live for nothing but Truth. Whether you remain in the non-co-operation ranks, or whether you do not, I cannot desert you, even as I

[1] M. R. Jayakar (1873-1959); lawyer and liberal leader; Judge, Federal Court of India; Vice-Chancellor, Poona University

This letter was sent in reply to Jayakar's letter of January 14, 1922, in which he had complained about Vithalbhai Patel's remarks on the first day of the Leaders' Conference at Bombay.

[2] From the source

[3] Presumably of the Committee set up on the previous day by the Leaders' Conference. Gandhiji dissociated himself from the resolutions passed by the Conference; *vide* the succeeding item.

[4] Vithalbhai Patel (1873-1938); elder brother of Vallabhbhai Patel; called to the Bar in 1908; Member of the Bombay Legislative Council; first elected President of Indian Legislative Assembly, 1925-30

cannot desert Malaviyaji, no matter where I find him for the time being. For, I consider you to be a man of Truth. You have left in me the impression that you are too cultured to do anything wrong, knowing it to be such.

The Story of My Life, Vol. I, p. 524

80. SPEECH AT LEADERS' CONFERENCE, BOMBAY[1]

January 15, 1922

MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS,

It is quite proper that Mr. N. V. Gokhale should ask three or four questions. He has asked those questions and I think I should render full explanation of what part I have taken in assisting the Committee to frame these resolutions. You will see there are not many vital changes in the resolutions as they were read to you yesterday. The Conference should remember that I do not propose to be a party to the resolutions of this Conference and so far as I am concerned, the non-co-operators also will not become parties. ("Hear, hear.") They will not take part in the discussion either. I am humbly of opinion that it is the special prerogative and duty of those who are not non-co-operators to consider fully the bearings of these resolutions and to accept them or to reject them as they choose. I defined the functions of non-co-operators yesterday and I repeat every word of what I said yesterday, and their function is this, namely, of advisers; but they do not identify themselves with these resolutions. That does not mean that they do not hold any opinion about these resolutions. They do certainly hold an opinion about these resolutions. There are certain things which the non-co-operators are called upon to do in the event of certain contingencies. Personally, I may explain to you what the attitude of the non-co-operators will be with reference to the obligations that these resolutions seek to impose upon them. With reference to the first resolution, I have absolutely nothing to say beyond what I said yesterday. I say it remains intact.

[1] According to *The Hindu*, 17-1-1922, the Committee appointed by the Conference on January 14 had met on January 15 before the resumption of the Conference and Gandhiji had attended this meeting "as an adviser and unofficially". The Conference resumed its session at 6 p.m. and this speech, taken from *The Hindu*, 18-1-1922, was published under the description "full text of Mahatma Gandhi's speech".

The second resolution also remains intact. With reference to that I have to tell the Conference, that I repeat the remark I made before the [Conference] Committee, that the resolution will be placed before the Working Committee[1], if it is sent to it officially by this Conference, and the Working Committee will consider that resolution, and I have assured the Conference Committee, and I repeat the assurance, that I shall advise the Working Committee to suspend general civil disobedience contemplated by the Ahmedabad Congress resolution pending the negotiations that the Committee to be appointed by this House will enter into with Government in the hope that there will be a round table conference granted. But beyond the 31st of this month, it will not be possible for me to advise the country to suspend general civil disobedience. I must also tell you that I was pressed to extend that limit of time but I feel grieved that I could not do so. I want to tell the reason very briefly for my inability to do that. To me even 15 days matter. Another reason I placed before you yesterday in view of what was going on in the country today. As to the repressive acts in the country, in spite of the faults or the crimes that the non-co-operators may have committed, I hold these acts of repression to be absolutely indefensible and the only answer that the non-co-operators can give is general civil disobedience. But in order to buy the support of those countrymen of mine who are not non-co-operators, in order to enlist their sympathy on our side, I have reluctantly said that we shall postpone general civil disobedience for a fortnight. ("Hear, hear.") I expect I shall be able to carry the Working Committee with me in this matter. We had an informal discussion on the subject last night amongst ourselves—the non-co-operators, and I was authorized by them to say that they had decided to wait for a fortnight in order to enable the Committee appointed by this Conference to enter into negotiations with the Viceroy. That will put us square with the Viceroy and show that we are reasonable people. We do not taboo a round table conference if a round table conference can be summoned with any prospect of success. And what is most important of all is that we want to place ourselves right with those of our countrymen who do not see eye to eye with us. Discharge the *fatwa* prisoners, discharge political prisoners against whom convictions exist or prosecutions are pending under the ordinary law or under the Criminal Law Amendment Act and the Seditious Meetings Act. This is what we asked for yesterday and they

[1] Of the Congress

are the conditions which I have been urging. My non-co-operator friends will perhaps be angry that I have been yielding to the blandishments of my Moderate friends. If they charge me with that, I am guilty. (Laughter.) With reference to political prisoners convicted or under prosecution under the ordinary law, I told you yesterday that it would be the Committee to be appointed by this Conference which could decide whether all such prisoners could be covered by the recommendations of this Conference, but I was borne down by the logic of facts and the pressure of friends. Therefore, I said, "If you want to appoint one nominee from yourselves and another from Government with power to appoint an umpire, I shall accept the proposal". I hope that my non-co-operator friends will not be angry with me for having accepted this proposal. As regards the persons who have been imprisoned in virtue of the normal law of the country which has been misused or misapplied, this small Committee will consider their cases and recommend their discharge. I have no hesitation in feeling that in the hands of that Committee the interests of our imprisoned countrymen will be quite safe. You will see that in yesterday's resolution there was a condition that activities of a hostile nature would cease today. I placed a phrase before the Committee in this connection and I found that I had landed myself into difficulties. (Laughter.) You will be surprised to find that the keen intellect of Pundit Kunzru detected a flaw in it, and that flaw put me on the proper track, and I said "No". I do not want to use any phrase of a general character, not for one moment. Our struggle is of the purest character. We have nothing to conceal from the country or from the Viceroy. So far as I am concerned, they should all know exactly what is in our minds. There is the question of activities of a general hostile character to be suspended pending this Round Table Conference. I can only bring myself to accept a definite thing, and, therefore, in order to enter into a compromise have sacrificed the interest of a number of women of Erode (Madras) and of Mr. Lavate of Poona. I have said that we shall suspend even the liquor shop picketing during the time the Conference is going on. This sacrifice I have made in order that I can gain the other purpose that neither the Viceroy nor anybody else can charge us with breach of faith. Provided those conditions that are to be fulfilled by Government are accepted by Government, we shall suspend hartal, we shall suspend picketing, and we shall suspend civil disobedience. Of course, it grieves me to say that we shall have to suspend lawful, peaceful and *bona fide* picketing of liquor shops, but I hope that my non-co-operator

friends will not be angry on that score. The chief thing that I want to say is that no other non-co-operating activity is to be suspended. Mr. Kunzru asked me whether if these prisoners are discharged and this notification is withdrawn, I would not stop enlisting volunteers. I say "No" emphatically. I would not stop the enlistment of volunteers for a single moment. It is not what we can possibly undertake to do on the ground that it . . .[1] preparation for civil disobedience. The preparation will not be of an offensive character nor of a hostile character. It is in the interest of those who are now ready for embarking upon general civil disobedience. They will have to embark upon civil disobedience at a given moment, so that they should keep the atmosphere of preparations ready for themselves. I do not consider that there I am doing anything of a hostile character. But I want this Conference to understand what are the implications of the undertaking that I have proposed to give after consulting the Working Committee which will meet tomorrow after the deliberations of this Conference are over. I have finished the whole of my work. I said to the Subjects Committee also that these things are all right. The Government may or may not grant these things today. To me the chief thing is that the Viceroy should not be able to say that we have given away the Khilafat. There is no open mind about the Khilafat. There is no open mind about the Punjab. The irreducible minimum has been before the country for a long time. All that can be discussed is, how to give effect to the Khilafat terms that are demanded, how to give effect to the Punjab terms that are demanded. ("Hear, hear.") I do want to appreciate all the difficulties that face the Government, but the vital principle of these demands is full Dominion Status. How is that to be arrived at? At the Round Table Conference also my emphatic submission to the Viceroy will be for a scheme in accordance with the spirit of this demand for full Dominion Status that will be evolved by duly elected representatives of the people of this country. I mean by the expression "duly elected representatives" all those elected representatives, elected under the Congress constitution, that is to say, under the four-anna franchise. That is, those who pay four annas each will be duly registered as voters and they will elect representatives. These representatives will evolve a scheme for full Dominion Status. I know this is a big question. I do not conceal that from you, from the country or from myself. I know also, I feel keenly, that this country is not really ready for mak-

[1] Some words are missing here.

ing a demand of that character. I have many misgivings about the Round Table Conference becoming successful. But I would have been false to my creed, to those friends whose association I have the privilege of enjoying and to the Viceroy — I do not want to be false to the Viceroy—I shall be false to myself, if I withheld these things from you, or from the country. So far as my advice is accepted by the non-co-operators or by the country I shall certainly press that they should not take a tittle less. Till we have all these things we shall not be free from the miseries that the country is oppressed with today. We gloat in our miseries, we take glory in them. We do not want the miseries to be sprung upon us as a surprise. As Lala Lajpat Rai said, this country is screwed up. I have less faith in the interests of my own countrymen because they have not suffered enough. Therefore I have got my own misgivings. I feel that the Committee that will be appointed will convey this humble message of mine in the name of non-co-operators to the Viceroy, that if he wants to convene the Round Table Conference, he should summon that Conference expecting that the non-co-operators will be satisfied with nothing less than what I have said. I am here to confess that we are fully able to take charge of all military dispositions of the country and that we are fully able to deal with all foreign complications. The worst that may happen is that we may be blotted out from the face of the earth. I am quite willing to be blotted out from the face of the earth so long as I can breathe the free atmosphere of India. ("Hear, hear.")

The Hindu, 18-1-1922

81. *SUMMARY OF TELEGRAM*

[Before *January 16, 1922*]

Mr. M. Singaravelu, President, [Madras] City Congress Committee, writes :

Mahatmaji wires to us that whilst he was delighted that almost complete hartal was observed, there was damage done by some people to the decorations, etc., and advises us to strain every nerve to find out the disturbing elements for further control.

The Hindu, 16-1-1922



82. THE LAW OF FRIENDSHIP

Many Hindus have been offended by Maulana Hasrat Mohani's speech about the Moplahs.[1] Some Congress workers in Madras have written letters[2] complaining against him. It would be better for the reader to pay attention to neither side. The Maulana takes one view while the Hindus of Malabar take another. The Maulana, assuming a certain state of affairs, is applying the law of war to it. The Hindus of Malabar have described the situation as they believe it to be, and have protested against the Maulana's remarks. The Maulana considers that the Moplahs had started a jehad and, according to the rules of jehad, those who help the enemy become enemies themselves. The Hindus gave information to the Government's officers and, therefore, became enemies; in such circumstances, the Moplahs would have fought even Muslims, let alone Hindus. The Malabar Hindus say : "The Moplah uprising cannot be called a war, or, even if it is regarded as war, Hindus, who are themselves slaves, cannot be regarded as enemies. Even if some Hindus, to protect their lives, reported the whereabouts of the Moplahs, they should not for that reason be regarded as enemies; if, nevertheless, they are so in the eyes of the Moplahs, at least their women and children and their temples should remain inviolate. All Hindus should not be regarded as enemies because of a few. What the Moplahs have done does not exemplify neighbourliness nor have they followed the law of war. Defence of the Moplahs is not justified and is likely to create suspicion in the minds of the Hindus." I think this argument is reasonable, but I do not blame the Maulana. He looks upon the British Government as an enemy. He would defend anything done in fighting it. He thinks that there is much untruth in what is being said against the Moplahs and he is, therefore, not prepared to see their error. I believe that this is his narrowness, but it should not hurt the Hindus. The Maulana speaks what is in his mind. He is an honest and courageous man. All know that he has no ill will against the Hindus.

[1] During their uprising in August 1921, the Moplahs had committed atrocities on the Hindus and Hasrat Mohani in his Presidential speech at the Muslim League session in Ahmedabad, had justified their conduct as legitimate retaliation.

[2] For excerpts from two of these letters, *vide* footnote 1 to "Hindus and Moplahs", 26-1-1922.

What he says is not out of hatred for the Hindus but out of anger against the British rule.

What should the Hindus do in these circumstances? They should defend the Malabar Hindus and explain their view to the Muslims, without getting angry with the Maulana or Muslims in general. Those Hindus who believe that some Moplahs indulged in criminal acts have a right to criticize them. Those Muslims who deny the charge are free to defend the Moplahs. Neither party speaks from first-hand knowledge.

It should be remembered, besides, that all Muslims do not argue as the Maulana has done. Many of them have condemned the Moplahs' conduct. The Government has thoroughly exploited the Moplahs' madness. They have punished the entire Moplah community for the madness of a few individuals and have incited the Hindus by exaggerating the facts. Malabar Hindus, like the Moplahs, are an excitable people and the Government has incited them against the latter. The measures which the Government has taken are not for the protection of the Hindus; they are only for its own protection.

Both Hindus and Muslims are weak. It is the weak who get angry and hate others. The elephant does not hate the ant. One ant hates another ant. Neither the Hindus who are filled with fear because of the Moplahs' misdeeds or the Maulana's defence of them, nor the Muslims who, without examining the facts, rush to the defence of the Moplahs, have understood Hindu-Muslim unity, which is one of the conditions [for the success of non-co-operation]. Hindus should not lose hope merely on account of the misconduct of a few Muslims or the Maulana's ignorance. The Muslims should stop putting up a defence like the Maulana's. If, however, both sides to a quarrel could show wisdom simultaneously, would the quarrel or the bitterness ever have come about? There must always be two sides for a dispute to arise. When one party commits an error, it behoves the other to remain calm. Only then can Hindu-Muslim unity survive. To remain good provided the other side remains good—this is no law of friendship, nor of war. It is but a bargain. In friendship, there is no room for bargaining. Friendship can exist only between brave parties and bargaining between weak parties. We are both weak and strong. Consequently, the relationship of Hindus and Muslims is both one of friendship and of bargaining. Let us hope that, day by day, the element of bargaining will disappear and that of friendship grow. If one side progressively purifies itself and becomes stronger, this friendship will become permanent.

Bravery does not mean browbeating others. He is not a brave man who uses his strength to terrorize others. The brave man is he who, though possessing strength, does not use it to intimidate others but, on the contrary, protects the weak. Can a brave man know fear? Muslims are physically strong. Even if they have the support of the whole world, Hindus should not be afraid of them but, placing their trust in God, should refrain from deviating, by a hair's breadth, from the path of justice. Muslims, too, should be ashamed to seek help from outside and should trust the Hindus despite the latter's numerical superiority. However, even if both sides do not act in this civilized manner and only one side does so, there need be no disruption of Hindu-Muslim unity. That is, even if one side is firm in doing its dharma, there will be no enmity between the two. He alone may be said to be firm in his dharma who trusts his safety to God and, untroubled by anxiety, follows the path of virtue. If Hindus apply this rule to the Moplah affair, they will not, even when they see the error of the Moplahs, accuse the Muslims. They will help those Hindus who have suffered losses and will enable them to stand on their feet.

Swaraj means that even if a person is in a minority of one, he may oppose the rest and be unafraid. Hindus should not depend wholly on the Muslims' good sense. Nor should the Muslim be frightened by the meanness of some Hindus. Each community should rely on its own strength and help the other. Why should a single Hindu have run away on account of the Moplahs' atrocities? Why should even one Hindu have reported the whereabouts of the Moplahs out of fear of the British troops? No Hindu was bound to report where the Moplahs had taken shelter. Why should a single Hindu have made a show of going through Islamic religious rites out of fear of the Moplahs? The rule which we follow in our fight against the British rule, viz., laying down our lives, should be followed in all cases of oppression. If we are ready to die at the hands of the tyrant rather than do his bidding, we shall be stronger than even the lion. Anyone who overpowers a tyrant by killing him will one day be tempted to become a tyrant himself, for, instead of looking to God for support, he will have learnt to depend on his own brute strength. A person who regards himself as God is bound to be destroyed. He can never be free because he has sought to usurp God's place and, in consequence, has lost his own rightful place. He has yet to strive and know what he is.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-1-1922

83. *MY NOTES*

A Gujarati's Remorse

If I do not admonish Gujaratis, who else will? I have heard that the person who had attempted to enter the Congress meeting with another's ticket[1] now feels extremely sorry. I am glad to hear this. The incident had pained me greatly because I trusted everyone. After one has repented, there is no more need for shame. Abbas Saheb once told me a story about himself, and that too very proudly. Though he lived like a king, once in a light moment he felt tempted to defraud the railway. However light-hearted, his action was theft all the same. He bought a second-class ticket for a relation of his and put her in a first-class carriage. The Tyabji family having become younger in spirit, now enjoy travelling third class. In the past, they always travelled by first class. When he reached home, he felt ashamed of himself. "I am the nephew of Badruddin", he thought. "If the world hears of my dishonesty, what will it say? And even if my action is not known, what would Badruddin have said? How can I forgive myself?" Repenting thus, the gentleman returned to the station. Remitting money for the purpose, he sent a wire asking her to pay the excess and get the ticket changed at the next station. By thus spending double the amount that he would have saved by his dishonesty and publicizing his misdeed to the entire station, he atoned for his error immediately. He can now narrate the incident to illustrate the nobility of the Tyabji family. Similarly, if this friend has felt sincere remorse—and everyone tells me he has —then he has indeed escaped a great danger. He has no longer any reason to feel ashamed and now he serves both the country and himself with great vigilance. There are no degrees in purity. Just as all right angles are of equal magnitude, so is all purity. As long as there is even a trace of impurity in us, we cannot be regarded as pure. Therefore, when judging ourselves, we should forgive nothing. We have a perfect right to be merciless to ourselves, to get angry with ourselves. If we learn this art, our attachments and aversions, poor things, may have some rest—and it is our duty to see that they get it.

[1] *Vide* "The Congress and After", 5-1-1922.

LALAJI'S LETTER

Lalaji has received a sentence of 18 months, so also has his comrade Pandit Santanam. Two others, Malek Lalkhan and Dr. Gopichand have got 16 months each. In a letter, written before the sentence was passed, Lalaji says in effect: "Do not worry about us. Do not think of our hardships and let the national cause suffer. Now that we are in for it, we should see it through. I did not go on a hunger-strike. I would not do that in order to secure special privileges. I am writing a history of India for the national schools. Pandit Santanam is engrossed in the study of Sanskrit. It is not a small matter for India that nowadays men of stainless character and learning are taking the place of criminals in our jails. The history of modern India commences now."

POETIC QUALITY

Once when I was talking with the Poet[1] about the Jallianwala Bagh Memorial and trying to persuade him to interest himself in it, he replied, "What poetry is there in it to attract me? Only what is poetic can have interest for me, a poet. In Jallianwala Bagh, unsuspecting men who had been trapped were shot down. Such an incident cannot inspire new life in people. It merely illustrates their utter helplessness. Does it deserve a memorial?" There was deep meaning in this criticism. I explained that the proposal for a memorial had not been made from a poet's point of view. I said that, if the public forgot Jallianwala, it would be incapable of creating poetry. When he had understood me, he agreed to write a letter for the Bombay meeting and did so. But as he felt that the meeting lacked poetry, he could not summon the courage to attend it.

But now the Poet has got a poetic subject. A lion like Lalaji will not be helplessly led into jail; he walks into it deliberately. There, he does not ask for any special privileges for himself. On the contrary, he regards hardships as privileges. Satyagrahis submit to beating in several places and allow their property to be seized, not from weakness but as a sacrifice. Sufficient material for poetry is thus piling up and the poets in the country can lay their hands on as much of it as each likes.

An English poet-painter has said that the people's art flowers at the end of a war. This is a half-truth. In so far as one people destroys another, it is not art but evil which flowers. It is to the extent that people willingly suffer and sacrifice their lives that

[1] Rabindranath Tagore

art flowers. That is why now, at the end of the Great War, England and Germany are not progressing; on the contrary, poison has spread in them. It is true that both have suffered, but the intention was rather to inflict suffering than to suffer. Neither country has cleansed its heart. Both, therefore, are again preparing to fight.

In this kind of war in pursuit of self-interest, there is a greater possibility of the vanquished reforming themselves. So Germany may perhaps rise. But there appears to be no such possibility for England. England has one hope and that is our non-co-operation. If our non-co-operation is truly a self-purification, then both we and England will rise to great heights. Where even one man performs *tapascharya,* the atmosphere is cleansed. When soda is applied to dirty clothes, the dirt is washed away. Self-purification is like this soda. With non-co-operation, it is unlikely that we shall rise and England fall. Our non-co-operation has offered England an opportunity for cultivating humility and repenting. If England avails herself of this opportunity, she will emerge glorious. If she does not, and if our movement is not genuine non-co-operation, England is already fallen but we also shall be crushed more than we now are. We are impotent. Although we are crushed under Britain's heel, we do not know we are. We, therefore, help her to crush us. But the tyrant who crushes others will degrade himself. Just as a foot placed in mud cannot but get dirty, so those who hold us down cannot escape degrading themselves.

I am, therefore, confident that in consequence and at the end of our struggle, the poets of India will have a sea of poesy from which they may carry away as much as they choose and yet not lack for more.

Deshbandhu's Road

Just as Lalaji is an exemplary prisoner in the Punjab, so is Deshbandhu Chitta Ranjan Das in Bengal. When his case was heard in the court, his khadi and his simple exterior so impressed the lawyers that they could not but stand up in his honour. Only a few months ago, he was a jewel among the lawyers of Bengal. Why would they not stand up? He was offered a chair, but he courteously refused it. He remained standing in the dock throughout. The chair was placed before him but he did not use it.

Thus, on all sides, we see flowing the nectar of heroism, of endurance. I am now impatient to see Gujarat counted among the provinces in which it flows.

POONA'S COURAGE

Perhaps readers of *Navajivan* do not know that I am in love with Poona. I expressed my admiration as long ago as 1915[1] when I returned from England. Poona's sacrifices are intelligent. No other place equals Poona in scholarship. Nor is there anywhere her simplicity and her voluntary poverty. Sanskrit learning spread from Poona. The Lokamanya and Gokhale lived here. The city has shrunk from no sacrifice. Poona can do much. Even now I feel that in making sacrifices, Poona will outstrip all. Shri Narsopant Chintaman Kelkar is carrying on his work with thoroughness. The Government also is testing him cleverly. The picketing of liquor shops is getting very well organized. The best non-co-operators go out to picket. Shri Kelkar sends out his entire family for this purpose. The Government merely imposes fines. If it refuses to arrest anyone, what can the Poona non-co-operators do? Women have now been sent out. I certainly envy this. I had hoped that the women of Gujarat would really take the lead in this matter. Bengal started, but the Government did not take up the challenge. The Poona women, by their action, seem to have created a situation in which either the Government must arrest them or repeal its law. Smt. Kelkar, Smt. Gokhale, Shri Gokhale's sister, Smt. Indumati Naik, Smt. Yashodabai Phadke and four other women set out to picket liquor shops. They were removed to the police-station and there set free. It is clear that there cannot be even a suggestion of force in this picketing and the liquor-booths are sure to close down as a result of it. Poona's women are intelligent and strong-minded. I have no fear about the outcome of the movement which they have started. It cannot but gather momentum and the Government will have to admit defeat. The fighters of Maharashtra have accepted the method of non-violence as a practical policy and there is no doubt, therefore, that they will proceed non-violently. And where there is a confluence of non-violence, sacrifice and wisdom, there can be no result other than victory.

It now remains for the women of Gujarat to compete with those of Poona. When will the men of Gujarat equal the sacrifice of Poona? Even if they keep pace with it, I shall be satisfied. Up till now, Gujarat has set no value on poverty, simplicity, heroism, fortitude and service of the country. Now Gujarat is showing zeal, but she has still to be tested by suffering. May God save Gujarat's honour.

[1] *Vide* Vol. XIII, p. 22.

Fruit of Sacrifice

Sacrifice means that the person making it dies or suffers for another. Those who suffer to advance their own interests make no sacrifice. Such persons do not deserve to be called human beings. The scripture has described those who live only for themselves as thieves.[1] It appears from a letter from Shri Rajagopalachari that the Moplah prisoners are not being ill-treated now. They are kept in properly ventilated carriages and are also given water, etc., on the way. Thus, as a result of the sacrifice of seventy Moplahs, the rest have got some relief. The Moplah prisoners who died had not sought death. Poor creatures, they were merely killed. If, then, innumerable Indians deliberately court suffering for the sake of the country, is it surprising that the latter should prosper? The man who purifies himself and gives up all for the sake of others will enjoy greater power than even an emperor. O God! Wilt Thou not give to any of us such purity and such strength to suffer? We will live as Thy slaves, but this is the strength we wish to have. We do not ask for a throne. We want the sufferings of those in misery to end. As the helpless Moplahs were choked to death, wilt Thou not give us the strength to come forward willingly to die in like manner for the sake of the country and the world? Grant it, I beseech Thee. And we shall ever remain grateful.

We Have indeed Become Free

Pearson, who lives in Shantiniketan with the Poet, has recently returned to India after an absence of five years. Having witnessed what he had never witnessed before—people's capacity to suffer for the country—he has sent the following message through C. F. Andrews :

> I am whole-heartedly with you in your splendid struggle for freedom. Your work has borne its fruit, for India is already free. Her spirit is no longer in subjection. Swinburne in his "Songs before Sunrise" writes:
>
> Open thy soul to see,
> Slave, and thy feet are free :
> Thy bonds and thy beliefs are one in kind.
>
> This is true of India, for we all realize now that India is no longer blind and, therefore, her feet are free. Of this I personally have not the shadow of a doubt and I am able to see India after an absence of five years.

Hundreds of prisoners are today witnesses to this fact. Deliberate courting of imprisonment has given the country a vision of

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 12

the goddess of freedom. India's chains snapped when Shaukat Ali, Motilal Nehru, Lalaji, Chitta Ranjan Das and Abul Kalam Azad went to jail. Let a settlement come when it will. Who knows whether happiness will come through a settlement or whether it lies in giving a stiff fight and going through painful suffering? A settlement is of the nature of a certificate. A dull student may require one. He who is confident in his possession of knowledge, will he use a certificate to prove it? Where is the need for a doctor's certificate to one who is healthy? The thousands who attended the Congress felt the glow of freedom. If they did not, then Pearson's letter has no meaning either.

But thousands felt the dawn of a new age just as Paul Richard did. If we are sure of this, then we need not worry about a settlement.

A "Rishi's" Blessing

The Poet's father was known as *Maharshi* or great sage. I have seen that the Poet's elder brother, who is now over 70 years of age, also deserves this title. Even today his strength is impressive. In India's progress he sees that of the world and looks upon the non-co-operation movement as a holy struggle. I welcome a letter from him as in the nature of a blessing. I occasionally place before readers letters from him which are likely to be of interest to them. At the time of the Congress session he sent a wire but, not satisfied with that, he has now sent a letter. I give its substance below:[1]

Sikh Heroism

Sikh courage reaches greater heights every day and along with their courage grow their endurance and their spirit of non-violence. The Government is now willing to return to the Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee the Keys of the Golden Temple of Amritsar which they had earlier taken possession of. But the Committee has refused to accept them until the Government agrees to release every Sikh leader who has been arrested. The Government, therefore, is in a dilemma. If it releases the Sikhs, it will be ridiculed and the strength of the Sikhs will increase two-fold. If it does not release them, their strength will increase ten-fold. It must, therefore, decide whether it would be wiser for it, to allow the Sikhs' strength to increase ten times or to release

[1] A Gujarati translation of the letter followed. For the original letter, *vide Young India*, 12-1-1922.

the Sikh prisoners and be laughed at, taking consolation in the fact that the strength of the Sikhs will then only be doubled.

AN ENGLISHWOMAN'S CONFESSION

There is no doubt that non-co-operation is producing its good effect even on the British. I have with me three letters of which two cannot be published. But there is one from an Englishwoman which I must publish. This lady has given her name and address; she does not want these to be made public, though she desires that the letter should be published. The substance of the letter is as follows:[1]

Frankness shines in every line of this letter. This woman sees the hand of Christ in all my work. A devout Hindu may see the hand of Rama or Krishna and a Muslim that of *Khuda* and the Prophet. For myself, I shall be satisfied if it has the hand of Truth. God, with His thousand names, is included in truth and I am certain that, if we abide by Truth and non-violence, we shall rise higher everyday and the very British, who today seem to be our enemies, will become our friends and upholders of nationalism.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 16-1-1922

84. LETTER TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

[*January 16, 1922*]

SIR,

What purports to be an interview with your correspondent appears in today's[2] issue of the *Chronicle*. I never gave your correspondent or anyone else an interview. The conversation reported was not for publication. I should not mind if all the humour and the gestures that accompanied the conversation could be reproduced. As it is, the whole interview is a caricature of a random talk. As it is difficult for me to correct the impression created by the interview without dotting the i's and crossing the t's, I must ask your readers to dismiss the whole "interview" from their minds. I hope Sir Sankaran Nair will not see the "inter-

1 A Gujarati translation of the letter followed. For the original letter, *vide Young India*, 12-1-1922.
2 Of January 16, 1922

view", but if he does I shall ask him to see the forthcoming issu of *Young India*[1] too.[2]

Yours etc.,
M. K. GANDH

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-1-1922

85. WORKING COMMITTEE'S RESOLUTION[3]

January 17, 192

A meeting of the Working Committee of the Congress was held in Bombay on 17th January to consider among other things the recommendations of th Malaviya Conference. The resolution passed by the Committee on the subjec is given below:

The Working Committee places on record its thanks to Pandi Malaviyaji and his fellow conveners for convening the conferenc of persons belonging to the various political parties in the country for the purpose of considering the existing tension, and havin considered the resolution of the conference, the Committee resolve that the offensive civil disobedience contemplated by the Ahmedaba Congress be not started till the 31st day of January 1922 o pending result of the negotiations undertaken by the Committe of the Malaviya Conference for a round table conference, which ever may be the first date.

The Working Committee considers it necessary for the purpos of creating an atmosphere favourable for a successful round tabl conference that:

(a) All notifications and notices declaring illegal and prohibiting the formation of volunteer corps, public meetings, picketin and other normal activities of the Congress or the Khilafat Committees be withdrawn and prisoners undergoing prosecution o

[1] *Vide* "The Malaviya Conference", 19-1-1922.

[2] The source published the following note along with this letter: "I view of Mahatma Gandhi's statement about my conversation with him regarding the Conference and its achievements, I extremely regret that through a mis understanding of the position, on my part, an unfortunate impression shoul have been caused. In the circumstances, I willingly accept the entire blame fo the mistake. I may add that I have Mahatmaji's generous assurance that ther was not wilfulness on my part and that he has forgiven the error of judgement —Your Special Representatative."

[3] Presumably drafted by Gandhiji

[4] At Gandhiji's residence, according to the report in *New India*, 18-1-1922

conviction in respect of such notices be discharged or released as the case may be.

(b) All *fatwa* prisoners including the Ali Brothers and their companions be released.

(c) All other prisoners already convicted or under trial for non-violent or other innocent activities be dealt with and discharged in the manner appointed therefor in the third resolution of the Conference and

(d) Simultaneously with the performance of the foregoing acts by the Governments concerned and in the event of a round table conference being called and pending such conference, all hartals, picketing and civil disobedience should cease.

In order to avoid any misunderstanding about the Congress demands, the Working Committee desires to draw the attention of the committee appointed by the Malaviya Conference to the Khilafat, the Punjab and the swaraj claims as stated publicly from time to time from Congress platforms and to state that therefore the Congress and the Khilafat representatives will be bound to demand full settlement of the three claims.

Young India, 19-1-1922

86. LETTER TO K. VENKATAPPAYYA[1]

BOMBAY,
January 17, 1922

DEAR VENKATAPPAYYA[2],

I have given much anxious thought to the no tax campaign going on there.[3] Apart from the possibility of suspension of mass civil disobedience by reason of a round table conference ever forthcoming, I think that you are not yet ready for non-payment of taxes. Fifty per cent of the population of the area of experiment has not yet, I apprehend, got rid of untouchability nor is that proportion of population accustomed to ways of non-violence, nor to khaddar manufactured in the respective areas. I omit the other items such as the unity between races and creeds. In these circumstances, I think it is the bounden duty of all of us to refrain from mass civil disobedience till the masses have undergone the necessary discipline and self-purification. In any other case,

[1] The source has reproduced this from *Janmabhumi*.
[2] President, Andhra Provincial Congress Committee
[3] In Andhra

mass disobedience will be not *civil* but *criminal* and will, therefore, render us unfit to conduct our own affairs as an orderly civilized nation. I, therefore, strongly suggest that you advise the ryots in all the districts to pay up at least the first instalment and devote the whole of the time and the energy of all the workers to acquiring the necessary qualifications. This opinion, I know, will disappoint many ardent spirits, but I am sure our success lies in that disappointment, for if the people are really eager for swaraj, and eager for civil disobedience, they will make the necessary mental change, under the pressure of that strong desire. The inimitable aptitude of Andhra women for artistic spinning and of Andhra weavers for artistic weaving should make the production of khaddar in the respective areas easy of accomplishment. But whether the acquisition of these qualifications is difficult or easy, we dare not avoid it without endangering the attainment of our cherished goal.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Hindu, 21-1-1922

87. INTERVIEW TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

January 17, 1922

Mahatma Gandhi was interviewed yesterday by our representative about the letter[1] written by Sir Sankaran Nair to *The Times of India* in regard to the recent Round Table Conference held in Bombay. Sir Sankaran, it might be remembered, walked out of the Committee meeting owing to difference of opinion.

The Mahatma said:

I have read Sir Sankaran Nair's letter to *The Times of India* with deep pain. It bears in itself traces of hurried draftsmanship and anger. I propose, therefore, not to answer seriatim the many misrepresentations it contains, but to give only broad facts.

Between the Conference and myself there was perfect harmony in spite of differences of opinion. I make bold to say that on matters that were not of vital importance I yielded without hesitation. The resolutions are the result of mutual discussion and deliberations. It is undoubtedly true that I want the Govern-

[1] For excerpts from the letter, *vide* Appendix I.

ment to be penitent, not in order to humiliate it, but in order to set it right with the people, and there will, certainly, be no peace in the land and no settlement until the Government acknowledges its mistakes and retraces its steps. The resolutions are calculated to enable the Government to do so gracefully. Nobody questions the right of the Government to put down violence. Sir Sankaran forgets what I said in reply to Mr. Jehangir B. Petit, namely, that I could conceive even the existence of justifiable martial law, when it is introduced to protect people and has the endorsement of public opinion. The present proceedings of the Government, which bear all the characteristics of martial law, without the odium of the name, are intended neither to protect the people, nor have any public backing whatsoever. They are intended to consolidate the power of an utterly irresponsible bureaucracy. The Khilafat claim certainly includes the evacuation of Syria by the French, but Sir Sankaran should remember what I said. I declared in the clearest possible language that I would be satisfied if Great Britain sincerely supported the Mussulman claim regarding Syria. I said that the Mussulmans, and I, in common with them, thoroughly distrusted Great Britain's intentions regarding the aspiration of Turkish Nationalists and the just claims of Indian Mussulmans. It is open in a round table conference to the Government to demonstrate to the satisfaction of non-co-operators that Great Britain is ready to do all in her power to satisfy the Mussulman claim. Sir Sankaran hardly does justice to himself, or to me, when he reports me as having said that I wanted the evacuation of Egypt, as a term of peace. In answer to an ejaculation about Egypt I remarked that although the Khilafat demand did not, and would not include the evacuation of Egypt, when India had full swaraj she could certainly not permit a single Indian soldier to leave India in order to coerce the brave Egyptians into submission to a foreign yoke.

Sir Sankaran's attack upon the Ali Brothers is hardly worthy of him. The Ali Brothers do believe in the possibility and necessity of the use of violence for the vindication of religious or national rights. But, I know that they are absolutely at one with the Congress programme and that they are more than ever convinced that as India is circumstanced, non-violence is the only remedy open to her for the attainment of her freedom.

Sir Sankaran ought to know better than to impute to me a promise of swaraj within one year. If I had made any such promise I would not have kept my head on my shoulders. All that I said was that India could have swaraj within one year,

and even less time, if she fulfilled the conditions categorically named at Calcutta[1] and repeated at Nagpur[2] in 1920.

Lastly let me correct Sir Sankaran by saying that the case of the Ali Brothers does not fall within the reference to the arbitration, but, being included among the *fatwa* cases, falls in the same category as imprisonments in virtue of the recent notifications. It surprises me to notice that Sir Sankaran imagines that a round table conference is possible without the presence of the Ali Brothers. That the Government might not see its way to release such formidable opponents as the Ali Brothers I can well understand, and they will release them only if Government desires to placate Indian opinion and substitute the force of public opinion for the force of arms.

The Bombay Chronicle, 18-1-1922

88. THE MALAVIYA CONFERENCE

The Conference was both a success and a failure. It was a success in that it showed an earnest desire on the part of those who attended to secure a peaceful solution of the present trouble, and in that it brought under one roof people possessing divergent views. It was a failure in that, though certain resolutions have been adopted, the Conference did not leave on my mind the impression that those who assembled together as a whole realized the gravity of the real issue. The mind of the Conference seemed to be centred more on a round table conference than upon asserting the popular right of free speech, free association and free Press which are more than a round table conference. I had expected on the part of the Independents to declare their firm attitude that no matter how much they might differ regarding the method of non-co-operation, the freedom of the people was a common heritage and that the assertion of that right was three-fourths of swaraj; that, therefore, they would defend that right even with civil disobedience, if need be.

However, as the attention of the Conference could not be riveted on that point but on a round table conference, the discussion turned upon the essentials of such a conference.

My own position was clear. I would attend any conference as an individual, without any conditions. My purpose as a refor-

[1] In the Congress session held in September

[2] In the Congress session held in December

mer is to convert people to the view I hold to be right and therefore to see everybody who would care to listen to me. But when I was asked to mention the conditions necessary for an atmosphere favourable for a successful conference, I had to press home certain conditions. And I must own that the Resolutions Committee approached my viewpoint with the greatest sympathy and showed every anxiety to accommodate me. But side by side with this, I observed an admirable disposition on its part to consider the Government's difficulties. Indeed the Government's case could not have been better presented, if it had been directly and officially represented in the Conference.

The result was a compromise. The withdrawal of notifications and the discharge of prisoners coming under the notifications and of the *fatwa* prisoners, i.e., the Ali Brothers and others who have been convicted in respect of the *fatwas* regarding military service, was common cause. The Committee saw the force of the suggestions that the distress warrants should be discharged, the fines imposed upon the Press, etc., should be refunded and that the prisoners convicted for non-violent or otherwise innocent activities under cover of the ordinary laws should be discharged upon the proof of their non-violence. For this purpose I had suggested the Committee appointed by the Conference. But on the Resolutions Committee showing that it would be difficult for the Government to accept such an uncontrolled recommendation, I agreed to the principle of arbitration now imported in the resolution. The second compromise is regarding picketing. My suggestion was that in the event of the round table conference being decided upon, non-co-operation activities of a hostile nature should be suspended and that all picketing except *bona fide* peaceful picketing should also be suspended, pending the result of the Conference. As the implications of hostile activities appeared to me to be too dangerous to be acceptable, I hastily withdrew my own wording and gladly threw over even *bona fide* peaceful picketing, much though I regretted it. I felt that the friends interested in liquor picketing for the sake of temperance would not mind the temporary sacrifice.

I agreed too to advise the Working Committee to postpone general mass civil disobedience contemplated by the Congress to the 31st instant in order to enable the Committee and the Conference to enter into negotiations with the Government. This, I felt, was essential to show our *bona fides.* We could not take up new offensives whilst negotiations for a conference were being conducted by responsible men. I further undertook to advise the Committee, in the event of the proposed conference coming off,

to stop all hartals, pending the Conference. This I hold to be inevitable. Hartals are a demonstration against bureaucracy. We cannot continue them, if we are conferring with them for peace. Workers will bear in mind that as yet no activity of the Congress stops save general civil disobedience. On the contrary, enlistment of volunteers and swadeshi propaganda must continue without abatement. Liquor shop picketing may continue where it is absolutely peaceful. It should certainly continue where notices unnecessarily prohibiting picketing have been issued. So may picketing continue regarding schools or foreign cloth shops. But whilst all our activities should be zealously continued, there should be the greatest restraint exercised and every trace of violence or discourtesy avoided. When restraint and courtesy are added to strength, the latter becomes irresistible. Civil disobedience being an indefeasible right, the preparations for it will continue even if the Conference comes off. And the preparations for civil disobedience consist in:

1. the enlistment of volunteers,
2. the propaganda of swadeshi,
3. the removal of untouchability,
4. the training in non-violence in word, deed and thought,
5. unity between diverse creeds and classes.

I hear that many are enrolled as volunteers in various parts of India, although they do not wear khadi, do not believe in complete non-violence, or, if they are Hindus, do not believe in untouchability as a crime against humanity. I cannot too often warn the people that every deviation from our own rules retards our progress. It is the quality of our work which will please God and not quantity. Not all the lip Mussulmans and the lip Hindus will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Islam is no stronger than the best Mussulman. Thousands of nominal followers of Hinduism belie their faith and discredit it. One true and perfect follower of Hinduism is enough to protect it for all time and against the whole world. Similarly, one true and perfect non-co-operator is any day better than a million non-co-operators so called. The best preparation for civil disobedience is to cultivate civility, that is, truth and non-violence, amongst ourselves and our surroundings.

The Demands

In order that all may approach the Round Table Conference with perfect knowledge of the Congress demands, I laid all our cards on the table and reiterated the claims regarding the Khilafat, the Punjab and swaraj. Let me repeat them here:

1. So far as I can write from memory, full restoration to the Turks of Constantinople, Adrianople, Anatolia including Smyrna and Thrace. Complete withdrawal of non-Muslim influence from Arabia, Mesopotamia, Palestine and Syria and, therefore, withdrawal of British troops, whether English or Indian, from these territories.

2. Full enforcement of the report of the Congress Sub-committee[1] and, therefore, the stopping of the pensions of Sir Michael O'Dwyer, General Dyer and other officers named in the report for dismissal.

3. Swaraj means, in the event of the foregoing demands being granted, full Dominion Status. The scheme of such swaraj should be framed by representatives duly elected in terms of the Congress constitution. That means four-anna franchise. Every Indian adult, male or female, paying four annas and signing the Congress Creed, will be entitled to be placed on the electoral roll. These electors would elect delegates who would frame the swaraj constitution. This shall be given effect to without any change by the British Parliament.

"If the Congress programme is so cut and dried, where is the necessity for a conference?"—asks the critic. I hold that there is and there always will be.

The method of execution of the demands has to be considered. The Government may have a reasonable and a convincing answer on the claims. The Congressmen have fixed their minimum, but the fixing of the minimum means no more than confidence in the justice of one's cause. It further means that there is no room for bargaining. There can, therefore, be no appeal to one's weakness or incapacity. The appeal can only be addressed to reason. If the Viceroy summons the conference, it means either that he recognizes the justice of the claims or hopes to satisfy the Congressmen, among others, of the injustice thereof. He must be confident of the justice of his proposals for a rejection or reduction of the claim. That is my meaning of a meeting of equals who eliminate the idea of force, and instantly shift their ground as they appreciate the injustice of their position. I assure His Excellency the Viceroy and everybody concerned that the Congressmen or non-co-operators are as reasonable beings as may be found on earth or in India. They have every incentive to be so for theirs is the duty of suffering as a result of rejection of any just offer.

[1] Appointed to enquire into the Punjab disorders of April 1919. For its report, *vide* Vol. XVII, pp. 114-292.

I have heard it urged that on the Khilafat the Imperial Government is powerless. I should like to be convinced of this. In that case, and if the Imperial Government make common cause with the Mussulmans of India, I should be quite satisfied and take the chance with the Imperial Government's genuine assistance of convincing the other powers of the justice of the Khilafat claim. And even when the claim is admitted much requires to be discussed regarding the execution.

Similarly regarding the Punjab. The principle being granted, the details have to be settled. Legal difficulties have been urged about stopping the pensions to the dismissed officials. The reader may not know that Maulana Shaukat Ali's pension (I suppose he occupied the same status as Sir Michael O'Dwyer) was stopped without any inquiry or previous notice to him. I believe that service regulations do provide for removing officers and officials from the pensions list on proof of gross neglect of duty or disloyal service. Anyway, let the Government prove a case for refusal to grant the Punjab demand save the plea of the past services of these officials. I must refuse to weigh their service to the Empire against their disservice to India, assuming the possibility of two such things coexisting.

The swaraj scheme is undoubtedly a matter on which there will be as many minds as there are men and women. And it is eminently a thing to be debated in a conference. But here again there must be a clean mind and no mental reservations. India's freedom must be the supreme interest in everybody's mind. There should be no obstruction such as the preoccupation of the British elector or the indifference of the House of Commons or the hostility of the House of Lords. No lover of India can possibly take into account these extraneous matters. The only question to consider will be: Is India ready for what she wants? Or does she ask like a child for food she has no stomach for? That can be determined not by outsiders but by Indians themselves.

From that standpoint, I do consider the idea of the Conference for devising a scheme of full swaraj premature. India has not yet incontestably proved her strength. Her suffering is great indeed, but nothing and not prolonged enough for the object in view. She has to go through greater discipline. I was punctiliously careful not to make non-co-operators party to the Conference resolutions, because we are still so weak. When India has evolved disciplined strength, I would knock myself at the Viceregal door for a conference, and I know that the Viceroy will gladly embrace the opportunity whether he be an eminent lawyer or a distinguished

militarist. I do not approach directly because I am conscious of our weakness. But being humble I make it clear through Moderate or other friends that I would miss not a single opportunity of having honest conferences or consultations. And so I have not hesitated to advise non-co-operators thankfully to meet the Independents and place our services at their disposal to make such use of them as they may deem fit. And if the Viceroy or a party desires a conference, it would be foolish for non-co-operators not to respond. The case of non-co-operators depends for success on cultivation of public opinion and public support. They have no other force to back them. If they forfeit public opinion, they have lost the voice of God for the time being.

For the manner of preparing the scheme, too, I have simply suggested what appears to me to be a most feasible method. The All-India Congress Committee has not considered it nor has the Working Committee. The adoption of the Congress franchise is my own suggestion. But what I have laid down as the guiding principle is really unassailable. The scheme of swaraj is that scheme which popular representatives frame. What happens then to the experts in administration and others who may not be popularly elected? In my opinion, they also should attend and have the vote even, but they must necessarily be in a minority. They must expect to influence the majority by a constant appeal to the logic of facts. Given mutual trust and mutual respect, a round table conference cannot but result in a satisfactory and honourable peace.

AN UNFORTUNATE INCIDENT

The abrupt withdrawal of Sir Sankaran Nair was an unfortunate incident. In my opinion, he had nothing to do with my, or later, with Mr. Jinnah's opinions. As Speaker, especially, he was exempt from any implied or express identification with anybody's views. I cannot help feeling that Sir Sankaran erred in the conception of his duty as Speaker. But as we progress towards democracy, we must be prepared even for such erroneous exercise of independence. I congratulate Sir Sankaran Nair upon his boldly exercising his independence, which I have not hesitated to call cussedness in private conversation, and upon the independence of the Committee in not suffering a nervous collapse but quietly electing Sir Vishveshwarayya[1], and voting thanks to the retiring Speaker for the services rendered.

Young India, 19-1-1922

[1] Sir M. Visvesvaraya, eminent engineer; former Dewan of Mysore

89. *WORSE THAN MARTIAL LAW*

For the time that savage repression continues, I must fill the pages of *Young India* with authentic tales of repression till India puts an end to it by an act of supreme sacrifice. I call the repression savage because it is wooden, wild, uncultivated, cruel. Grant that there is intimidation and even violence resorted to by some non-co-operators in pursuit of hartal or other activity. Is it difficult to find and punish the culprits? If the Government cannot get witnesses, does it not show that the whole populace is behind the so-called intimidation? An act, however reprehensible in itself, when it becomes the act of a people, ceases to be a crime capable of being dealt with by its laws. Therefore, repression by an irresponsible government can never be a popular act or an act designed for the safety of the people. But in the present instance, repression is designed to suppress the rising agitation directed against the misdeeds of the Government and is, therefore, doubly unpardonable.

However, it is not the purpose of this article to demonstrate its unjustifiable character, but to demonstrate its brutal quality, to show that it is worse than martial law.

The Punjab martial law was comparatively a civilized measure and being so named at least served the purpose of producing a shock. The acts now being done under the protection of the ordinary law but really without any law at all are absolutely without any check. Martial law has its own code of honour, but this state of lawlessness has none.

Take the Faridpur flogging. Dr. Maitra is a well-known physician of Calcutta. He is a non-party man. He has given a graphic report of his visit to the Faridpur Jail. Two cultured men, one a head master, were tied to a whipping triangle and whipped for the offence evidently of not salaaming the jail officials. When Dr. Maitra visited the jail, the punishment was not even registered anywhere. He found many prisoners including under-trial ones in handcuffs for whole nights. One prisoner had standing handcuffs for three days.

> Nearly double the number of prisoners have been huddled together in particular rooms or cells of the jail than their allotted capacity of accommodation, without adequate attention to their diet, clothes and bedding in this cold weather.

The only thing that the Bengal Government have to say, is not to deny any of the acts but to justify them on the ground of discipline. The Government *communique* says, "The punishments have had the desired effect and discipline has since been maintained."

Now let us travel to Allahabad. The U. P. Government have produced a certificate of character from Mahadev Desai who is able to say truthfully that now he is humanely treated. But let the reader digest the blood-curdling story of the ill treatment of the prisoners in the Naini Jail including the flogging, supplied by him.

From Sitamarhi comes the news that a fine of Rs. 25,000 and a punitive police have been imposed upon its inhabitants. Sitamarhi is a sub-division in Bihar. The fine and the punitive police means sacking of the households of Sitamarhi. The *Motherland* gives an account[1] of the looting of villages —Sihulia, Chandarpur and Bharatawa.

In Sind things are no better, as the following letter[2] from the Sind Congress Committee will show:

> *The Hindu* publishes a letter from one Rahmat Rasool, a Punjabi martial law prisoner who along with two other co-accused is now confined in Hyderabad Central Prison. He writes that on their arrival in this jail from the Andamans in November last, they were locked up in a cell meant for prisoners condemned to death and there no meals were given to them for three days, till the Medical Officers saw them and got them meals. Later on, whenever the Superintendent approached them they were required to raise their hands as a Muslim does in prayer with the greeting—"Sarkar is one." This immoral rule interfering with the fundamental principles of Islam, Rahmat Rasool refused to obey, telling the Superintendent that for him God alone is one and that he can raise his hands in prayer before God alone . . . with the result that his religiousness was rewarded with the fivefold punishment of thirty stripes, six months' solitary confinement, six months' gunny-clothing, six months' cross-fetters and six months' bar-fetters . . . the political prisoners . . . are all treated as if they were worse than even common criminals . . . .
>
> It will also be remembered that in July last police had fired on innocent people in Matiari, killing one and wounding several others. The Government Commission report has been pigeon-holed in Bombay Secretariat . . . .
>
> Recently, with a view to recover a fine he [Sub-Inspector] entered the house of a convicted and imprisoned non-co-operator and forcibly removed

[1] Not reproduced here
[2] Only excerpts reproduced here

his property from the possession of *purdah* ladies occupying the house, including a gold nosering which he forcibly snatched from the nose of the convict's brother's wife . . . .

Neither person nor property, neither man nor woman is safe from the attention of the Government. Nor is life easy in the jails. Mere custody of the body does not satisfy the requirements of the Government. Tortures and humiliations have also been added.

Thus we have martial law less Jallianwala Bagh. And this is worse. Jallianwala Bagh, though atrocious, was the cleanest demonstration of the Government intentions and it gave us the needed shock. It was an open air transaction. What is now going on is being done inside the cold prison walls or in little unknown villages and, therefore, has no theatrical value. Our duty, therefore, clearly is to invite martial law and "no damned nonsense" and evolve the courage to draw the rifle fire not in our backs as in 1919 but in our open and willing breasts and without resentment.

Young India, 19-1-1922

90. A CORRECTION

To
THE EDITOR, *Young India*

SIR,

I have just seen your note[1] on Agha Safdar's arrest. Your correspondent has indulged in some gross untruths. I may tell you that (1) the Magistrate was not insulted by the crowd, (2) the crowd did not enter the jail, (3) the police officer's attitude was not courteous. You have entirely misreported on these three vital points . . . . You would in future test the credentials of a correspondent before publishing his statement.

Yours sincerely,
SECRETARY,
CITY CONGRESS COMMITTEE

SIALKOT, 20-12-1921

I gladly publish the correction by the correspondent.

Young India, 19-1-1922

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 15-12-1921, under the sub-title "Agha Saheb Safdar".

91. HOOLIGANISM IN MADRAS

Dr. Rajan in a letter written on the 13th, the day of the hartal[1] in Madras, writes:[2]

> The Madras hartal has been thoroughly successful. The whole city seems to be dead for the day . . . . But I never dreamt of the underlying risks of a hartal in a great city. We had prided ourselves that the inflammable parts of the city had been brought under control. . . . I, Ramanathan and Audinarayana Chettiar were at three or four danger spots and averted an impending riot. It is hard to lay the blame on any particular party. The mob simply get furious at those who defy public opinion, but yet a kind word, a gentle remonstrance from those who represent the Gandhi party pacifies them. The sight of the armed men irritates them. One little boy was bayonetted in his thigh in the city. So far we have heard of no other incidents. Just as I am writing, I hear that two were shot at near Mount Road. . . .
>
> Lord Willingdon, the Governor, and Sir P. Thyagaraja Chetty, the chief of the ministerial party, went in person to the Kotwal Bazaar, the heart of the city. They promised military aid . . . .
>
> Later, I went to Mount Road on foot. A Parsi cinema house "Wellington" was the scene of the tragedy. There was a threatening crowd in front of the cinema and there was some stone-throwing. A Parsi fired from upstairs in the midst of the crowd. One of the crowd died on the spot and I was told two more were injured. The crowd got excited, broke into the theatre and smashed windows and furniture. After some time they were brought under control and the whole of the locality is under military guard. Cavalry and armoured cars are patrolling. This road happens to be the route through which the Prince has to travel to and fro. But the Prince's route has been changed, along the beach.
>
> I am just now informed that Sir Thyagaraja Chetty is besieged in his own house by the crowd. He did not attend the Council today when the Prince came. . . . I understand nothing has happened to his person nor is likely to happen.

I have reproduced Dr. Rajan's letter not to congratulate Madras on the successful hartal, but to bemoan the outbreak of hooliganism on the day of hartal. It were better if there was no hartal and no hooliganism. It is no defence that the wanton

[1] Observed to boycott the Prince of Wales' visit to Madras

[2] Only excerpts reproduced here

destruction was the work of hooligans. For, it is complete proof of non-co-operators' unfitness for self-government in Madras. Those who claim the capacity must be able to control all forces of violence. Hartal was not peaceful because what happened to the poor cinema-keeper would have happened to the others if they had dared to keep open their shops. I hold the firing by the cinema man to be justifiable inasmuch as his theatre would have been destroyed if he had not fired. The mob's increased fury was an exhibition of insolent rage against deserved punishment. The investment of Sir Thyagaraj Chettiar's house was a cowardly interference with personal liberty. The crowd that prevented the knight from doing honour to the Prince dishonoured itself and enhanced the value of the honour Sir Thyagaraj Chettiar was prevented from doing. It might be the crowd's way, but it was not non-co-operators' way of "doing business".

Dr. Rajan and his lieutenants left no stone unturned to make and keep the hartal peaceful. All honour to them. But Madras teaches us a lesson as Bombay has. We have still much work to do before we can really establish a swaraj atmosphere. Either we believe in a successful peaceful revolution or we believe that non-violence is merely a preparation for violence. If the latter represents the true state of things, we must revise our creed. But I am optimistic enough to believe that India has imbibed the spirit of non-violence in a most remarkable way. The exemplary self-restraint exercised in Amritsar, Lahore, Aligarh, Allahabad, Calcutta, Barisal and other places too numerous to mention, shows that where only pledged non-co-operators work, we can rely upon non-violence being observed, but where, as in Madras, an undisciplined mob gathers together, non-co-operators have no control. We must not despair of devising a remedy against repetition of the Madras hooliganism. Equally unfortunate is the attack in Hardoi upon Mr. Baker who has fortunately escaped death. The stray maniacs are most difficult to trace or handle. I doubt not that it is the work of some unknown person unconnected with non-co-operation. But we must deal with such cases also. In a non-violent atmosphere such occurrences must be almost impossible. But it must be confessed that the requisite atmosphere has not yet been reached. It will only be, when we have eradicated violence from our thoughts.

Young India, 19-1-1922

92. NOTES

NON-PAYMENT OF TAXES

I observe a desire in some places to precipitate mass civil disobedience by suspending payment of taxes. But I would urge the greatest caution before embarking upon the dangerous adventure. We must not be indifferent about violence, and we must make sure of masses exercising self-control whilst they are witnesses to the confiscation of their crops and cattle or forfeiture of their holdings. I know that withholding of payment of taxes is one of the quickest methods of overthrowing a government. I am equally sure that we have not yet evolved that degree of strength and discipline which are necessary for conducting a successful campaign of non-payment of taxes. Not a single tahsil in India is yet ready, except perhaps Bardoli and to a lesser degree Anand. More than fifty per cent of the population of such tahsil has to rid itself of the curse of untouchability, must be dressed in khadi manufactured in the tahsil, must be non-violent in thought, word and deed, and must be living in perfect friendliness with all whether co-operators or non-co-operators. Non-payment of taxes without the necessary discipline will be an act of unpardonable madness. Instead of leading to swaraj, it is likely to lead to no-raj. I must, therefore, repeat the caution I have so often uttered that mass civil disobedience ought not to be tried in the first instance, except under my personal supervision, and certainly never without the fulfilment of the conditions laid down at Delhi.[1]

"SARKAR SALAAM"

I have reproduced the letter from Sind, showing what is required of prisoners in Hyderabad.[2] A telegram has been received from Noakhali, enquiring whether non-co-operation prisoners should utter the formula "Sarkar Salaam". In my opinion that formula, as also *Sarkar ek hai*, is degrading, and the latter is even profane. No religiously minded person can say or believe: Sarkar is only one! That can be said only of God, and Him alone. Therefore, whilst I would advise political prisoners to conform to the jail regulations in so far as they are intended to keep

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXI, pp, 411-4.

[2] *Vide* "Worse than Martial Law", 19-1-1922.

discipline, they must even at the risk of their lives resist all degrading practices which may be imposed in the name of discipline. Similar to the "Sarkar Salaam" formula is the practice of stretching forth the palm of one's hands in front of officials or that of sitting in a crouching posture. These things may be necessary for dangerous criminals, but a non-co-operator must not be expected to conform to such unmanly exhibitions of themselves.

New Spinning-wheel

An improved spinning-wheel with many spindles was exhibited at the Ahmedabad exhibition. It is perhaps the most successful of all efforts. But I warn the public against waiting for revolutionary inventions. The existing charkha is perfect of its type. In the interest of economy of mental effort and national time, I would urge lovers of swadeshi to forget improved charkhas that are expected to give much larger output of yarn than the ancient type. Let all energy be devoted to making the ancient pattern more durable and cheap and portable.

Christian Awakening

Mr. Andrews writes as follows:[1]

> When I was in Lahore a short time ago in order to see Mr. Stokes in the Central Jail, a group of some fifteen to twenty Indian Christian students came to see me . . . they asked me particularly concerning my recent visit to East Africa and Uganda. I tried to point out to them how beautiful a thing it would be, if some of them could go out to Central Africa, not to make money, but simply to help the Africans in love . . . two of them came back and said to me, "We wanted to come back on behalf of everyone of us to tell you that we had a short informal meeting outside after we had left you, and we passed a unanimous resolution asking you to give to Mahatma Gandhi our love and to tell him that our hearts were with him."

Young Men's Sacrifice

The young Mr. Barua who has gone to jail thought it worthwhile to send the following long telegram[2]. I give it as a sample of earnestness and desire to act correctly.

[1] Only excerpts reproduced here

[2] Not reproduced here. Mr. Barua had said that he had founded a non-co-operation organization at Golaghat, his birth-place, and that since he was going to jail, his brother would "fulfil the task".

FROM AMERICA

The national movement is producing a deep impression upon our people outside India. Prof. Kosambi writes[1] from Cambridge (Mass.):

> The accompanying appeal for the T.S.F.[2] was issued here about seven weeks ago and the subscription that was collected up to this date is $ 156 or Rs. 570 for which I am enclosing a cheque herewith . . . Most of the contributions come from the poor Indian students who have to depend upon their labour or scholarships for their maintenance in this country . . .
>
> From the time of the Boston Tea Party and the Battle of Bunker Hill up to the Sinn Fein movement in Ireland, all the nations on earth had employed force as the only weapon to liberate themselves from domestic or foreign tyranny; but it was left to India under your leadership to discover a new means for freedom, which is, as the *Nation* (New York) puts it, "a secret not learned in centuries of warfare". And the Press of this country from the most radical to the most conservative is unanimous in praising you and the Indian national movement. This is indeed a great gain to us. . . .

I omit the appeal as its purport appears in the letter. The money has been earmarked for the depressed classes work.

Young India, 19-1-1922

93. FLOGGING IN PRISONS

The following is the translation of a letter[3] received from Mr. Mahadev Desai on his way to the Agra Jail. It is possible that the posting of the letter is a breach of jail discipline. I hate any breach of discipline but in this instance I have no choice. Duty compels me to publish the letter as it has compelled Mr. Desai to post the letter. I do not mind Mahadev Desai being rewarded with flogging for the indiscipline which is certainly more mischievous than the refusal to wear lousy clothes or the innocent shouts of *jais*[4].

Young India, 19-1-1922

[1] Only excerpts reproduced here

[2] All-India Tilak Swaraj Fund

[3] Not reproduced here; *vide*, however, footnote to "My Notes", 15-1-1922, under the sub-title "Shri Mahadev's Letter".

[4] *Jai* means victory.

94. TELEGRAM TO K. VENKATAPPAYYA AND OTHERS[1]

[Before *January 20, 1922*][2]

YOU ARE THE BEST JUDGES OF THE SITUATION. IF DELHI CONDITIONS ARE SATISFIED AND IF YOU FEEL CONFIDENT, I HAVE NO RIGHT TO INTERFERE. GODSPEED. HE WILL BLESS ALL HONEST HUMBLE EFFORTS. KEEP ME DAILY INFORMED.

GANDHI

The Hindu, 23-1-1922

95. LETTER TO A FRIEND[3]

January 21, 1922

MY DEAR . . .,

I assure you that I shall take no hasty step. I am constantly praying for light and guidance.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi, p. 207

[1] Sent in reply to a telegram from Venkatappayya and others which read: "After deep and respectful consideration of your letter [of January 17, 1922] . . . I. . . submit the following regarding Guntur . . . The movement is far ahead. Village officers, including *Panchama* and Christian *vettians*, are resigning in large numbers. Arrests . . . are increasing in different places . . . *Panchamas* and Christians are enlisting. Excepting wells, untouchability is disappearing. The attachment, though very provocative, the people are peacefully submitting. Cooking vessels, even with food, are distrained even by Christian officials entering Brahmin kitchens, but these acts are not objected to. The taluqs in experiment are self-sufficient in khaddar. Not less than 60 per cent in villages, including women, wear khaddar. We respectfully submit that Delhi conditions are satisfied.

"The Military arrived at Guntur with armoured cars and motor lorries. Advocacy of payment under the circumstances will result in the ultimate effacement of our district from the movement seriously jeopardizing even other districts. Awaiting your favourable consideration. Reply."

[2] The addressees sent the text of this telegram on January 20, 1922, for publication in *The Hindu*.

[3] Addressee not known. According to the source, Gandhiji had been receiving many letters "cautioning him against any indiscriminate or hasty step" and this letter was written by him, just before his departure for Bardoli, "to a very particular friend of his".

96. *WHERE IS SWARAJ?*

After the arrest of Lalaji, Das, Nehru and Maulana Abul Kalam, God knows what happened, but people have ceased to ask, "Where is swaraj?" My anxiety has disappeared and I feel that nobody will henceforth ask me for any explanation. People have started sending wires: "Congratulations on attainment of swaraj." Paul Richard came and spoke on December 31 as if a new era had dawned. Pearson wrote from Shantiniketan saying that, on returning after an absence of five years, he found that India had become free.

Swaraj is a state of the mind. When it becomes permanent, swaraj will take visible shape. But, the state of mind having changed, it has already arrived.

Although I never let go an opportunity for a settlement, I am hesitant to seek one now after discovering India's strength. If there is a political settlement before we have developed our full strength, what will be our fate? Such a settlement will be like a baby born before its time and dying soon after. There was an overnight revolution in Portugal and a new government was established with the result that revolutions followed one another and there was no stable government. Everybody congratulated Turkey when there was a sudden change of government there in 1906. It, however, turned out to be a short-lived affair. The revolution came and vanished like a dream. Turkey has had to suffer much since then and no one knows how much more still its brave people will have to suffer.

With these experiences in my mind, I feel perplexed and do not know what is good. At this juncture, I positively shake with fear. If there is a settlement, who knows where it will lead us?

People have not yet realized clearly that swaraj can be secured with the help of a contrivance which even an inexperienced village carpenter can make and which an innocent and tender girl can operate. As days pass, however, I get more convinced that India will win freedom only through this machine and in no other way.

Have we been convinced, even now, that the real education of the people consists not in literacy but in building up character and in learning to use one's hands and feet—to work with the body? Parents even in Gujarat have not overcome their hankering after literacy. They, too, have not yet recognized the right

place of literacy in education and do not concede that children should first be taught respect for moral rules, then comes the training of their bodies and proficiency in some craft which will secure them their livelihood, and then the training of the intellect, instruction in the three R's by way of embellishment. Abbas Saheb informs me that most parents are simply unwilling to withdraw their children from the Government high school at Nadiad. All parents in Gujarat are not yet ready to send their children to the national schools which inculcate a better outlook in them, or to appreciate the value of the training in freedom which they impart.

As regards lawyers, the position is worse still. Have they overcome their infatuation for law-courts? Have we started settling our disputes among ourselves? Have the lawyers realized that justice should not be costly? Even now, religious leaders who are considered to be pillars of their respective faiths hope to secure justice in the Privy Council in disputes concerning their religious affairs. Lawyers have not yet overcome the allurement of fat fees and, in consequence, the cost of justice continues to be counted in terms of gold and guineas. If there is a settlement today, we shall not have suffered to the very soul and, after the settlement, who will be interested in these matters? The law-courts will carry on as they are doing today. How, then, shall we establish *Ramarajya*? In *Ramarajya*, justice cannot be sold.

Have the Hindus and Muslims achieved complete unity? Has their mutual distrust disappeared? Is there an identity of ideals in regard to the future of the country? Both have realized the need for friendship, but their hearts have not yet united; they are in the process of being united. If there is a settlement, this process will be interrupted. It is, therefore, fruitless to talk of freedom as long as the two have not united.

As long as the truth about the self
Is not understood,
Your spiritual effort
Has not borne fruit.[1]

These lines are completely true about swaraj. We may substitute "swaraj" for self and we shall clearly see how. We have yet to understand the meaning of the different aspects of swaraj. If Hindu-Muslim unity means enmity towards Parsis, Christians or Jews, that unity will be a curse for the world. So long, therefore,

[1] The lines are from a poem by Narasinh Mehta.

as we have not fully understood the meaning of Hindu-Muslim unity, the very desire for settlement is wrong.

Have we, besides, imbibed the spirit of non-violence, which is the prerequisite of dedicated effort? Have we accepted the fact that our peaceful non-co-operation is a sign of strength? We still regard our non-violence to be the weapon of the weak, do not recognize its real worth and so we bring discredit to it. This is as foolish as giving away a guinea taking it to be a half-rupee coin. Non-violence is a weapon of the strong and is respected only when employed by them. Non-violence means forgiveness and this is the glory of the brave. He who does not eat because he has no appetite does not acquire the merit of fasting. If someone does not kill because he cannot kill, he practises no virtue. There can be no virtue in anything done unwillingly. When the fighters who are getting ready in Bardoli and Anand do not harass or do not harbour ill will against any Parsi or Englishman or any other person co-operating with the Government, then only will they be considered fit to be enrolled in a non-violent army. One who uses non-violence as a cover for violent thoughts is not only a traitor to his own country but to the entire world, because the world is watching intently, like a person thirsting for water, our experiment with the weapon of non-violence. As long as the country has not learnt to regard non-violence as a weapon of the strong, we should look upon a settlement as something which will defile us and we should keep miles away from it.

What shall I say, moreover, to Hindu readers? Though I regard myself to be a devout Hindu, I make bold to say that, as long as Hindus do not treat *Dheds* and *Bhangis* as their own blood-brothers, they are not themselves Hindus. There will be a shower of flowers from the heavens when caste Hindus embrace *Bhangis* with affection. Then alone will the cow receive real protection. Compassion and hatred of man by man cannot go hand in hand. The shortcomings of *Dheds* and *Bhangis* have to be overcome through love. The words of Anandshankar Dhruva always ring in my ears. Our enemies are the *Dheds* and *Bhangis* in our hearts. They are the real untouchables. The human beings in flesh and blood, whom we commit the sin of treating as untouchable, are our kith and kin. We should mix with them and serve them and thereby earn the merit which accrues to virtuous deeds. If a *Vaishnava*[1] sucks out poison injected by the bite of a serpent into the body of a *Dhed* or a *Bhangi* and afterwards enters a temple without

[1] Devotee of Vishnu

taking a bath, even the temple will be sanctified. It would be like Sudama[1] or Vidura[2] visiting Krishna at his home. As long as we have not plucked out the weed of untouchability or have not understood, as Anandshankar Dhruva has done, the real meaning of untouchability, we should not even think of a settlement.

We can fulfil these great tasks and purify ourselves only by suffering. He alone who is prepared to die for liberation can attain it. Those who do not welcome their death go to miserable worlds. One who dies voluntarily becomes fit for liberation. Similarly, if we steadfastly cling to the means indicated above, give up the fear of death, then, and then only, shall we win freedom—swaraj. Das, Lalaji, Motilalji, Abul Kalam Azad and others are teaching us the *mantra* of dying willingly. It seems we have learnt that lesson, and so no one asks the question, "Where is swaraj?" Everyone says that, now that we have the strength to die willingly, we have won swaraj. The rest is all a mirage.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 22-1-1922

97. *JOINT CONFERENCE*

The All-Party Conference convened by Bharat Bhushan[3] Malaviyaji has ended. Let us examine its gains.

It can be said that those who doubt the utility of non-co-operators participating in such a conference have not understood the meaning of non-co-operation. A non-co-operator does not let go a single opportunity for co-operation. Every time, however, he considers whether such co-operation will advance his cause. Every peaceful movement is sustained by public opinion. One who is pledged to propagate his views peacefully has no other strength except the justice of his cause and, therefore, he is always ready to explain them to everybody. It was thus the duty of non-co-operators, when invited, to accept the invitation.

Though they attended the Conference, they did not become a party to it. They refrained from voting. Non-co-operators were willing to utilize the services of neutral persons as intermediaries,

[1] A fellow-student of Krishna. He later paid a visit to his boyhood friend living as a renowned Prince in Dwarka and Krishna felt greatly honoured by the visit.

[2] An humble character in the *Mahabharata* who held Krishna in reverence

[3] "Ornament of India"

and I think that was the right attitude. They enhanced the prestige of the National Congress and saved people's time by proceeding systematically and by selecting me as their sole spokesman. Besides, in a conference like this, there was more for non-co-operators to listen to than to explain. By adopting this attitude, we maintained decorum. The Conference went through its business without hot exchanges.

Sir Sankaran Nair got angry for no reason. In the first place, he got angry over my stand.[1] He did not like my laying down so many conditions one after another. At that very stage, he expressed his desire to withdraw. But, finding that Malaviyaji, Mr. Jinnah and others did not like his attitude, he cooled down. When, however, the matter of releasing *fatwa* prisoners came up, he could bear no longer and walked out of the Conference.

He had been appointed the "Speaker". A president can adopt a partisan attitude, but a "Speaker" has no right to do so. A "Speaker" is appointed to conduct the meeting in accordance with the rules of procedure. He has no right to express his own views. Sir Sankaran Nair, therefore, ought to have refrained from expressing his views. Instead, he intervened in the discussion and ultimately left the chair. Everyone regretted this but nobody felt discouraged. As soon as he had left the meeting, Panditji proposed Sir Visvesvaraya and he took the chair. A year ago, Sir Sankaran Nair's leaving the chair would have created a sensation and led to much persuading. But now the people have become free, they know their rights and the limits beyond which one must not go and are, therefore, able to manage such situations with patience.

All the resolutions adopted at the Conference can be said to be reasonable. They could have been more elaborate and stronger. If, however, the resolutions which have been passed are acted upon by the Government, the foundation for a settlement will have been laid.

But there is little hope that the Government will act upon the recommendations of the Conference. It will be a bitter pill for it to release the Ali Brothers. If it permits enrolment of volunteers and holding of meetings, releases the hundreds who have been arrested and returns the securities of the presses, it will then have to accept the demands in respect of the Khilafat, the Punjab, etc. If it does not accept these demands, the freely expressed

[1] *Vide* Appendix I.

public opinion will be so strong that no government in the world can afford to ignore it.

There is every possibility of a happy outcome if the Government convenes a conference after accepting these conditions. We can see, however, that it will do nothing of the sort. What, then, was the good of attending the Conference convened by Malaviyaji? It is that our demands got wider publicity and the Moderates cannot argue now that we do not wish to meet or to listen to anybody. We showed humility by attending the Conference. Those who are resolute and strong would meet their adversaries and critics a hundred times and yet stick to their own views as long as they are convinced that they are in the right.

As I write this, I have before me the reports of the debates of the Central Legislative Assembly in Delhi on this subject. From the debates, it would appear that many of the members are not at all aware of the present conditions in the country. We were being urged to enter such a legislature. We can see that it is a legislature which respects not public opinion but the views of the Government. Let nobody think that if there were in the Assembly others—non-co-operators themselves in place of the present members—the result would have been better. They also would have been in the same plight. Let us suppose that all other members in the legislature were united; even then the Government would have followed its own way. As long as the Government remains power-drunk, no person can achieve anything by entering the councils. While the Executive is totally independent of the Legislature, no other result is possible.

As long as we have no control over the army and the police, we are bound to remain dependent. And there are many simple-minded people among us who believe that, in order to acquire this control, we ourselves should learn military drill and control the mischievous elements. The non-co-operation movement shows that if we cease to be afraid of the army, we can win power without learning military discipline. For this purpose, we should learn the lesson of peace, the hearts of Hindus and Muslims should be cleansed, or moral character should be reformed and we should have greater self-confidence.

We have not yet acquired the necessary self-confidence. In view of this weakness of ours, I made it clear to Malaviyaji that I would, of course, attend if the Viceroy called a conference, but that we were not equipped with sufficient strength to compel acceptance of our demands. We have not yet acquired sufficient control over mischievous elements and the forces of violence.

There was, no doubt, a successful hartal in Madras, but soon the trouble-makers went back to their old ways.[1]

A poor cinema exhibitor was harassed and Sir Thyagaraja Chetty's house was surrounded by miscreants. These people are also counted among non-co-operators. They, too, had joined the hartal. The volunteers could not bring them round. The incident means that when the Government relinquishes power, it is the rowdies who will rule, not we. If, thus, every time there is trouble the rowdies have their way, how can non-co-operation succeed? We should, therefore, give up all hope of winning swaraj as long as we have not acquired sufficient influence over such elements.

And yet, how can we at all give up hope? When we see people getting the strength to bear flogging and to suffer the hardships of prison, we know that they are bound to get all power. All that is necessary is to cultivate still greater capacity to suffer and to purify our hearts still further. We have to learn to lay equal emphasis on both the terms in the phrase "civil disobedience", learn to disobey and yet remain civil. Disobedience without civility will destroy us, whereas disobedience with civility is completely safe.

As a consequence of the Conference, we have only to suspend mass civil disobedience till January 31 at the furthest. No other activity of ours need be suspended. We should continue to enrol volunteers. The swadeshi movement should not be halted for a moment. The movement for washing away the stain of untouchability should go on. We should keep on trying to wean away drink-addicts. The less the enthusiasm we show in these tasks, the longer will the attainment of swaraj be delayed.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-1-1922

1 *Vide* "Hooliganism in Madras", 19-1-1922.

98. *MISERY IN HAPPINESS*

One who has a conscience and thinks cannot easily get bodily happiness. He is oppressed by the misery of others and pines away. He cannot bear to see the suffering round him. Such a pitiable condition is Mahadev Desai's, for, he tries to judge the rightness of every action of his. He was happy as long as he was suffering physically, since he had been all too eager to go to jail in order that he might suffer. But now that he is happy in jail and the jailor is favourably inclined, he suffers inwardly. Others are more or less in the same plight as Mahadev Desai. The discussion which has started in the Agra Central Jail,[1] where all the non-co-operators have been brought together, could not have taken place when these same prisoners were themselves suffering and were even sometimes flogged. At that time, they had a glimpse of the sun of swaraj peeping from behind the mountain of suffering and they used to forget their pain in the warmth of its rays. But now, when they have swaraj in jail, enjoy some freedom, these freebooters in the army of swaraj are fighting among themselves just as robbers fight for a share of the booty. The description of the fight had better be read in Mahadev Desai's own words. I have not reproduced every word of the letter, as I did in the case of the previous letter, but have omitted certain sentences and given only the relevant part. It was written on the 15th.[2]

There is a lot for us to learn from this letter. Mahadev Desai's letter clearly shows that after we have secured power, we shall not be able to maintain the propriety and the restraint which we have been showing during the struggle.

Let us recognize that there is a great difference between power and swaraj. At present, most of us are fighting merely for power and authority. In this scramble, I see obstacles and impediments in our path. I see violence coming out of it. In the struggle for swaraj, there can be only healthy rivalry. Swaraj means self-rule, rule over oneself. In this struggle, he wins who bends and bears. It requires great self-restraint. In a scramble for power, everyone wants to be the first, so everyone fights against everyone else.

[1] Whether they should agitate against distinctions of class among political prisoners arrested in connection with the non-co-operation movement,

[2] The letter is not translated here.

Under autocratic rule, the foremost wins; under swaraj, on the contrary, the hindmost wins. Thus, there is between the two as much difference as there is between an elephant and a horse or, rather, between east and west. If we remember that we are carrying on a fight for swaraj, we shall overcome all obstacles.

If Mahadev Desai's companions recognize this difference and behave accordingly, all will be well, the non-co-operation prisoners will win pure swaraj in jail and its fragrance will spread all over India. Though Mahadev Desai feels apprehensive, I am confident that he and the non-co-operation prisoners who are with him will come to the right decision[1] and, getting up at 4 o'clock, say morning prayers, sing devotional songs in praise of Allah and Krishna and thus sanctify the jail.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-1-1922

99. *MY NOTES*

"There Is Only One Government"

There is a letter from Sind which contains the news that prisoners in jails are made to say, "There is only one Government", and the words are shouted from a distance when some official visits the jail and the prisoner is obliged to stand up. News has been received from another place that prisoners are made to shout, "Salutation to the Government". Jairamdas of Sind, who is in the Sabarmati Jail, was ordered to hold his arms down, palms outwards, and stand up, when any official approached him. He disobeyed the order and hence the permission granted to him to read newspapers has been withdrawn. In some other place, a prisoner is asked to bow down his head, put his hands on the floor and stay in that uncomfortable position.

It has been asked whether a non-co-operator prisoner should obey such orders. Doubts have arisen in people's minds because of the article[2] on the model prisoner which appeared in *Young India*. The matter is easily decided. It is our principle never to obey any rule which inflicts humiliation or which is intended to insult our manhood. Certain things can never be permitted in

[1] Mahadev Desai had started group prayers in the manner of the Satyagraha Ashram at Ahmedabad and some prisoners had objected to the inclusion of Sanskrit verses.

[2] *Vide* "A Model Prisoner", 29-12-1921.

jail. Generally, the prisoners are rough people who are in jail for crimes involving moral turpitude. It is only now that prisons have become a gateway to freedom. The jails, therefore, have certain rules to which lovers of liberty will never submit.

If a statement like "There is only one God", the kind of statement that can be made about God alone, is applied to the Government, no prisoner who really understands dharma or cares for self-respect can ever accept it, so that there is no choice but to disobey a rule of this sort without fear of the consequences. One should not mind if one is severely punished for this in jail, is put in a dark cell, has to suffer hardships or endure flogging or is even made to starve. One may have to bear all this, but one must civilly disobey a rule of the kind described.

I for one welcome this opportunity. The many evils of prison-life will now get automatically reformed. We are discovering to what extent force is employed even in jails. The very basis of this Government is force. Where flattery of the few and oppression of the many is the general policy, we say that the Government follows the methods which prevail in a demon's kingdom.

But what holds good outside [jail] also holds good inside [it]. We need civilized strength even inside jail—civility on the one hand and the utmost strength on the other. Our movement can progress only if we use discretion in everything we do. We should also understand the difficult position in which the jail officials are placed. Since they are always thrown among criminals, they are rough in their methods and occasionally cruel. On coming into contact with cultured prisoners, jail warders and others cannot all at once change their behaviour. Moreover, so long as the jail regulations remain in force, they are bound to follow them. We have, therefore, no option but to put up with certain hardships and hence we should use our judgment and take thought every time we are inclined to resist. For instance, we may not say, "Salutation to the Government", but we should certainly salute the warder, respect him and stand up when he comes. A prisoner is but a prisoner. He should not forget what kind of behaviour is proper in jail and what restraints are necessary there. Ultimately, we have to melt the hearts of even the jail officials and make these people gentle and compassionate.

KATHIAWAR

A friend wants to know whether volunteers should be enrolled in Kathiawar. My advice is, "No." A resident of Kathiawar who is willing to be enrolled as a volunteer should himself sign the

pledge in British territory and give his name and address. In Kathiawar, only constructive activities like swadeshi, abolition of untouchability, propaganda against drinking, national education, etc., should be taken up. The same friend says further that they have started producing khadi in several places but that the people have become so comfort-loving that many of them do not like to wear it, with the result that while stocks of khadi have accumulated in many places, the people use mill-made or foreign cloth. This is disquieting news. It is of course like ordering rice from elsewhere, refusing to use *bajra* growing in one's own field. And it is because of this thoughtless attitude that we have become beggars and slaves and, if we do not change it, we shall be impoverished still further. If Kathiawar, which grows cotton, red wheat and *bajra*, has to import cloth or foodgrains, how can it remain prosperous?

"Swaraj Ashram"

Shri Phooken has written a letter from Silchar Jail in Assam in which he has called the jail "Swaraj Ashram". He adds that anyone who wants swaraj will be admitted into this "Swaraj Ashram" and says further that as long as there can be no peace with honour, the prisoners have no desire for peace at all, and that, in jail one can get a very fine idea of what swaraj means.

Refusal to Pay Taxes

In Gujarat, as also in the rest of the country, it is being debated whether the people should withhold payment of land revenue. The more I think about this, the clearer it becomes to me that we are still not fit to do this. Anyone who refuses to pay taxes with a view to saving money is certainly a thief, and we shall not win swaraj with the help of thieves. Such swaraj will be a government of thieves. The swaraj will be of the same quality, as, and will be controlled by, the people with whose help we win it. And hence I have been telling the people that they should not desire swaraj to be secured even by my efforts. Even Gandhi-rule will not be swaraj. Therefore, my only desire is that all should try to copy me—that is, cultivate self-restraint to the extent at least that I have done; be truthful in speech, firm, determined, self-possessed and fearless. We can thus see that we should hesitate even to seek help. I often caution my co-workers and tell them that, in their impatience, they should not obtain help from all and sundry. They should see that their means are the purest. A surgeon who does not keep his instruments clean and well-sharpened sometimes kills his patient or, at any rate, inflicts on him avoidable pain. From this, we should understand that, so long as

the cultivators have not been trained to make sacrifices in a peaceful manner and to work in the national cause, it would be a great sin to turn them towards the path of non-payment of taxes and we ourselves would have to suffer the consequences.

It is my advice, therefore, that individuals may, after full consideration, do what they like, but it will be in the country's interest that all others, save people in Bardoli and Anand, should pay up the taxes. There are many other simple ways of civilly disobeying the laws and these we can adopt without any fear. People who do not wish to pay taxes will be justified in withholding payment only if they fully observe the conditions laid down for non-co-operators.

WHAT ABOUT PICKETING?

All our activities except mass civil disobedience continue in the intervening period till January 31 and, therefore, we go on with the picketing of liquor shops and schools where we have been doing it. If we stop it at any place for our own reasons, it will be a different matter. Picketing, hartal and civil disobedience will be completely suspended only when there is a round table conference. One does not know when such a conference will be held, if ever. And, moreover, before we stop these activities, all swarajist prisoners should have been released.

HELP FROM AMERICA

Some of our leaders still believe that we should maintain an agency to publicize our activities in England, America and other countries. I am convinced that this will mean mere waste of money; not only that, it will actually do us harm. We shall have to engage some persons [for the work] and we shall in that case lose the independence which we enjoy today. Our present attitude is that we will fight with our own strength and not with any help from abroad.

I believe, moreover, that in the measure that our work here is solid, it will get known by itself. He who wants to magnify a thing needs to advertise it; but he who is humble, that is to say, he who trusts in God, minimizes whatever he does and values his work modestly. There is sufficient power in every action to publicize it, and that is why it is said that truth will be known. This applies to both good and bad actions. A crime, however much one may try to hide it, will always be discovered. The sun can never be hidden by a wicker basket, and if we could put together thousands of suns and make each of them twice as large as the present sun, the light of truth would be assuredly brighter than

their combined light. Why, then, should we seek publicity for our struggle based on truth, which shines with its own light?

We have recently had from America an illustration of this truth. An Indian resident there has collected and sent us Rs. 570; he also informs us, moreover, that the Americans have been taking deep interest in our struggle. Prof. Kosambi, who undertook this effort, writes:[1]

HAND-WRITTEN NEWSPAPER

The *Independent* continues to be published as a hand-written paper. Another paper, named *Swaraj*, has also ceased publication in Prayag[2] as its security has been forfeited. Hence this paper, too, is being now brought out as a hand-written paper. I have before me its first issue. It is published in Hindi and has four pages. The editor lets himself go now; he is free to commit as many nominal crimes as he may wish. I see in it nothing but crimes from the point of view of the bureaucracy. But the paper will certainly continue to appear until all the contributors are arrested. With more help from copyists, its circulation will increase.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-1-1922

100. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

Sunday [January 22, 1922][3]

CHI. DEVDAS,

I at last got your letter today. The copy of the *Independent* is not clear. It should be such that there should be no difficulty in reading it. It does not matter if you can make fewer copies. Should not your articles also be clear? To bring out such a newspaper is also an art. You should find out how lithographing is done.

Send me the full details of your meeting Joseph in connection with the Modern High School.

Blessings from
BAPU

MASTER DEVDAS GANDHI
ANAND BHAVAN
ALLAHABAD

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 7809

[1] The letter is not translated here.
[2] Traditional name for Allahabad
[3] From the postmark on the postcard in Gandhiji's hand

101. LETTER TO JOSEPH J. GHOSE

[*Tuesday, January 24, 1922*][1]

DEAR MR. GHOSE[2],

I thank you for your letter. I have just received the following wire from my son to whom I sent your letter as soon as I got it:

> Ghose's letter astounding. Allegations false. Allahabad volunteers best behaved.

Is there likelihood of your having been misinformed? It is likely that my boy has been misled. I cannot imagine his deceiving me. I should, with your assistance, like to reach the bottom of this difference of opinion. I may add that my boy is very careful and his judgement is as a rule sound. I believe too that he thoroughly understands the spirit of the struggle. Will you not see him and discuss the matter with him? I am asking him to meet you.

I am not disposed to stop all picketing. I think it has moral value if it is absolutely peaceful.

You had certainly a perfect right to punish the boys who did not obey you. And boys who disobey must take the risk of being rusticated.

I am sorry you are having all this trouble.

Yours

From a photostat: S.N. 7656

102. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

Tuesday [*January 24, 1922*][3]

CHI. DEVDAS,

I have your telegrams. That Sherwani has been struck off the rolls is quite welcome. After all, he is not going to practise until we have the reins of Government in our own hands.

I have sent a copy of your telegram to Ghose. You may see him by appointment and explain to him the whole thing. I send you a copy of the letter I have written to him.

[1] From Ghose's reply dated January 31, 1922 (S.N. 7810)

[2] Joseph J. Ghose; then Head Master, Modern High School, Allahabad

[3] The news of Sherwani having been struck off the rolls was wired to Gandhiji by the addressee on January 23. The Tuesday following was January 24.

We do not want to hide any of our faults.

I am leaving for Bardoli on Thursday night. Afterwards, I shall have to stay there most of the time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 7656

103. NOTES

AN ENGLISH LADY BLESSES

"An English lady" who sends her name and address, writing from Calcutta, says:

> It elevates one to see the admirable way in which Mr. Gandhi shows us the truth and opens our eyes to the atrocious things that our so-called noble Government are doing daily. The letter that an "English missionary" has written is admirable.[1] I am afraid, there are many more like her, but are too proud to come forward and acknowledge the noble work that Mr. Gandhi is doing. His patience and work are like the spring that lies hidden far below. No matter what the world may preach, God will give him a harvest greater than he expects. It is only those who work in silence reap the harvest. Millions are watching and judging him. But there is One above all, watching and judging each struggle in his daily life, and when his toil and struggle are over, his work and name will live for ever. His name will be worshipped by millions who have gained freedom by his hard work. God bless and spare him and his dear wife, and give them both health and strength to go on until this struggle is over, which will not be long.

It is not without hesitation that I share this letter with the reader. Although written impersonally, it is so personal. But I hope there is no pride in me. I feel I recognize fully *my* weakness. But my faith in God and His strength and love is unshakable. I am like clay in the Potter's hands. And so in the language of the *Gita*, the compliments are laid at His feet. The blessings such as these, I confess, are strength-giving. But my reason for publishing this letter is to encourage every true non-co-operator in the non-violent path he is pursuing, and to wean the false ones from their error. This is a terribly true struggle. It is *not* based on hate though men of hate are in it. It is a struggle which is based on love, pure and undefiled. If I felt any hate

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 12-1-1922, under the sub-title "In God's Hands".

towards Englishmen or those who in their blindness are associated with the blind administrators, I have the courage to retire from the struggle. A man who has the least faith in God and His mercy, which is His justice, cannot hate men, though at the same time he must hate their evil ways. But having abundant evil in himself and ever standing in need of charity, he must not hate those in whom he sees evil. This struggle, therefore, is intended to make friends with Englishmen and the whole world. It cannot be by false flattery, but by plainly telling Englishmen of India that their ways are evil and that we will not co-operate with them so long as they retain them. If we are wrong in so thinking, God will forgive us, for we mean no ill to them and we are prepared to suffer at their hands. If we are right, as sure as I am writing this, our suffering will open their eyes even as it has opened those of "an English lady". Nor is she the only one. I meet Englishmen during my travels. I do not know them, but they greet me cordially and wish me success and pass on. True, as against scores who thus bless me, there are hundreds that curse me. These curses also I am bidden to lay at His feet. They come from ignorance. Many Englishmen and even some Indians consider me and my activity to be mischievous. Non-co-operators must tolerate even these. If they get angry and retaliate, they lose the battle, whereas if they suffer, they win without fail and without delay. *The whole of the delay is due, I am convinced, to our shortcomings.* We have not been always non-violent. We have, contrary to our pledge, harboured ill will. Our opponents, the English administrators, their co-operators, the talukdars, the rajas have distrusted us and have felt afraid of us. We are bound by our pledge to clothe them with the fullest protection. Whilst we may not help them in the exploitation of the poor and the weak, we must not harm them. Though they are in a hopeless minority, they must be made to feel safer in our midst than they are behind the bayonets. If we were in a hopeless minority, ours would be an easier position—we would long ago have proved our faith. As it is, our numbers embarrass us. The dissatisfaction with the present regime is common to us; but not the burning faith in non-violence. We must not be satisfied till we have rendered impossible the disgraceful scenes that took place in Madras. We must not, with non-violence on our lips, obstruct court proceedings. Either we seek imprisonment, or we do not. If we do, we must let the Government take us away as fast as they wish. The struggle is prolonged to the extent that we fail to understand the implications of non-violence.

ADMITTED AS A BOARDER

If anyone has any doubt about the true inwardness of the struggle, I hope the following[1] from Babu Prasanna Kumar Sen will help to dispel it. At the time of being sentenced, he was Secretary of the District Congress Committee of Chittagong.

> I have been admitted as a boarder in His Majesty's Hotel for two years and a half. During the last 4 or 5 years I was always thinking of bidding adieu to my profession as a lawyer . . . and retiring to Hrishikesh in the Himalayas for spending the rest of my days there in religious pursuits as a recluse. So long I could not . . . .
>
> Now the All-Merciful Father has showered His immense blessings on me by suddenly taking me off from the midst of worldly bustles and vouchsafing unto me complete rest within the prison walls . . . .
>
> I am now fully convinced, my dear Mahatmaji, that this temporary rest will . . . qualify me for the attainment of the highest object of human life—*the eternal nirvana.*

I assure the reader that Prasanna Babu's wish to attain supreme happiness in jail is not an idle dream. I know Hrishikesh. It certainly holds blackguards on earth as it holds saints. I know the prison life. Only a pitch black wall separated one of the greatest murderers of South Africa and me. We were both in isolation cells by design, for we were both considered dangerous to society. I had to suffer most in that cell for nearly two months. But I learnt most when I suffered most. It was the time of the fattest harvest. Whilst the suffering lasted, it was difficult to bear. But it is now one of the richest treasures in life's memory. We have today converted the jails into heavens of refuge for liberty-loving men. They can be easily turned into abodes for attaining *nirvana.* The prison cell where Socrates drank the poison cup was undoubtedly the way to bliss. He lives today through the memory of that ineffaceable scene.

"SWARAJ ASHRAM"

Prasanna Babu pictures the jail as a means to attain the highest state. Babu Tarun Ram Phooken calls his jail "Swaraj Ashram." Sjt. Phooken is an Assam leader. I may inform the reader that he is a first class shot and a fine sportsman. But he has learnt the secret of suffering. Writing from the Silchar Jail he says:

> I think I was doing enough mischief from the Government point of view to justify my arrest and imprisonment. I am obliged to you and also to

[1] Only excerpts reproduced here

the officials concerned for the peace and safety secured for me here. I trust you will soon be able to secure peace and safety for those outside the jail. We will accept them when they come in all humility but, I hope, not in humiliation. We should seek no temporary peace, but permanent peace based upon equality and on the principle of common participation for common benefit, for, I believe that sort of peace only can be lasting. Peace on any other terms is sure to leave a sting behind which will be beneficial neither to the governed nor to the governors.

If we play the game manfully, honourably and without malice or bitterness, it does not much matter, in my humble opinion, whether we win or lose; for selfless sufferings, if there be any, will not and cannot be lost eternally.

The letter is countersigned by the Superintendent of the jail. Motilalji warns me from his hotel in Lucknow against embarking upon any premature and patched up peace. He is willing to be in jail indefinitely. There are many Swaraj Ashrams cropping up in our midst. But there are none so true as the jails. They are built not with money but with stout hearts.

IN BURMA

The nationalist wave is spreading. I have made room for two articles on Burma. Swami Shraddhanandji[1] and Mr. Abbas Tyabji gave me glowing accounts of the national awakening in that land of elephants and wonders. The spoliation of Burma by the British is a sad chapter in their sad history. And sadder still to me is the fact that Indians have not hesitated to take part in the spoil. I have never been able to take pride in the fact that Burma has been made part of British India. It never was and never should be. The Burmese have a civilization of their own. The Buddhism of Burma is quite different from the Buddhism of India, as European Christianity is totally different from Christ's Christianity. I wish to say nothing in disparagement of either. The message of Jesus was too strong for the European mentality. The message of the Buddha was too strong for the Burmese mentality. Both the nations have profited by the messages they received to the extent of their receptivity. But there is no doubt that Europe has still to understand the deep meaning and the mysteries of the mission of Jesus, as the Burmese of the Buddha. This the latter can only do, if they are enabled to progress along their own lines. It is, therefore, a

[1] Mahatma Munshiram (1856-1926); later known as Shraddhananda; nationalist leader of Arya Samaj; took prominent part in public activities in Delhi and the Punjab

matter of the keenest joy to me that there is a wonderful awakening in Burma. There is no doubt that the Burmese, if they persist in their effort, can solve their simple problem much more quickly than we can with diversity of bewildering complications.

IN AMBALA

The Punjab is truly working wonders. The Sikh must take and they fully deserve, the credit for producing the non-violent atmosphere. Their pertinacity, their amazing sacrifice at Nankana Saheb,[1] the imprisonment of their best leaders and the Government's complete surrender, have filled the Punjab with pride and hope and the spirit of sacrifice and non-violence. The reader will not, therefore, be surprised to read the following from Lala Duni Chand of Ambala:[2]

Lala Duni Chand has nursed Ambala for years. He had, before non-co-operation days, a very lucrative practice of which he used to devote the largest part to the many public works which he had initiated. He had, therefore, no difficulty in getting round him a band of self-sacrificing young men to work with him. He is now having them to go to jail without any difficulty. Swaraj is the visible immediate fruit of sacrifice. The citizens of Ambala are, therefore, feeling the advent of swaraj. The awakening among the women of the Punjab as elsewhere is an event whose value we are not at the present moment able to measure adequately. If the truth is to be told, it was Mrs. Duni Chand who paved the way for Lala Duni Chand's sacrifice. She it was who prepared him for it. Nor is Mrs. Duni Chand's the only instance. I have the privilege of knowing several sisters who are responsible for their husband's greatness.

IN ROHTAK

As in Ambala, so in Rohtak. The pages of *Young India* have made the public familiar with the sacrifice of Lala Sham Lal. Only his was undertaken in spite of his wife and parents. He had to battle against tremendous difficulties. But he bore them all down. He has now the honour of being arrested in common with other friends. These men are the pride of their country They are not fanatics. They are hard-headed business men who have given up their businesses at the call of country and religion. They are no

[1] In February 1921; *vide* Vol. XIX, pp. 421-5.

[2] The letter, not reproduced here, described the non-co-operation activities and arrests of volunteers in Ambala district.

breakers of peace. They are the keepers of it. And a government must be on the very verge of bankruptcy that finds it necessary to lock up such citizens.

In Amritsar

Lala Girdhari Lal, President, District Congress Committee, Maulana Mahomed Daud Gaznavi, President, Khilafat Committee, Master Sunam Rai, President, City Congress Committee, and Sardar Ravell Singh, President, District Sikh League, were arrested and are now convicted because they had the audacity to arrange a public meeting in the teeth of the Seditious Meetings proclamation. Amritsar has already contributed a good number. Now all the presidents have been taken away. They have got two years' rigorous imprisonment each and Rs. 500 fine each, or three months more in default. They have all been taken to Mianwali Jail. The beauty of it is that no matter where you look, no Congress Committee is without its officers. The people have learnt that in a well-managed organization the officers live for ever, though individual holders of office may die, be imprisoned, or desert. The idea itself is really magnificent connoting as it does the unity of man and his estate.

In Lahore

The capital of the Punjab is doing no less. Lala Duni Chand of Lahore says in a letter dated 14th instant:[1]

Such work is bound to renovate the nation. It is little wonder, therefore, that the Punjab Government have threatened measures "more systematic and rigorous than any which have hitherto been adopted" in order to deal with civil disobedience. The notice in question says:

> It will be impossible to allow any incitement to pass unnoticed, or to tolerate any dabbling in this form of mischief by Government servants or pensioners. It will, unfortunately, be necessary to add substantially to the burdens of the province by the entertainment of such additional police and executive staffs as may be necessary for the maintenance of order.

The notice argues:

> Successful, it (civil disobedience) could only be an education of the criminally inclined among the population in methods which they would be naturally ready to put into practice against any kind of government, present or future; unsuccessful, it could only throw back the course of progress and establish well founded doubts of the political maturity of those

[1] Not reproduced here. The letter described the holding of a public meeting and women's activities for the propagation of khaddar.

who deliberately introduced so dangerous a poison into the veins[1] of their motherland.

The writer of the notice has overargued the Government case and thus overreached himself. The notice has merely resulted in stiffening the backs of the people. In the first place, civil disobedience is not and cannot be instilled into the minds of the criminally inclined people. The educated class, the women, and students are hardly criminally inclined. And even the peasantry cannot be classed among "the criminally inclined". If the people had not learnt to be peaceful, they would not have stood the assaults and insults that Dr. Gokul Chand Narang and his fellow-commissioners have so graphically described in their able and closely reasoned report on the allegations of assaults[2] committed by the police on the 13th day of December 1921 in Lahore. Secondly, the civil disobedience is not aimed at all Government, present or future. It is aimed only at the present Government which has criminally defied the will of a whole people. Thirdly, why is it mischievous or poisonous to tell people not to obey a Government which has systematically emasculated the people? Are the people to continue to be party to humiliations imposed upon them by an irresponsible bureaucracy?

But let us look at Dr. Gokul Chand Narang's report. In my opinion, it provides abundant justification for disciplined civil disobedience, if the people are to live as free men. The Committee has found that:

1. The volunteers were carrying on peaceful work.

2. The police "with long brass bound lathis" suddenly came down upon the volunteers and the public and belaboured them without warning.

3. The volunteers on refusing to disperse in spite of injuries received by them were arrested, discharged and rearrested and after a few hours' detention about one o'clock at night were deliberately set down at separate places far away from their homes.

4. The volunteers were filthily abused by the custodians.

How are the people to deal with such legalized criminality? Are they meekly to submit to it or are they as self-respecting men to disregard authority by disobeying orders? If the things Dr. Gokul Chand Narang has described happen in a city like Lahore, what must be the plight of poor villagers? If the newspaper reading public were not utterly ignorant of the village life and in-

[1] The source has "views."

[2] *Vide* "Notes", 22-12-1921, under the sub-title, "Remarkable Proof".

different to the hardships of villagers, the fetish of law and order in whose name unspeakable horrors are perpetrated would have been destroyed long ago. The campaign of civil disobedience is designed to evolve true law and order which the public will consider it a privilege and a duty to obey.

In Bengal

Things are no better in Bengal. In the name of "law and order", meetings are being forcibly broken up. Pandit Ambika Prasad Bajpeyi, editor of *Swatantra*, Pandit L. N. Garde, editor of *Bharatmitra*, are the latest additions to the roll of honour. The trial of Deshbandhu Chitta Ranjan Das and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad is dragging its weary length. In the Barisal Jail, six political prisoners are reported to be consigned to solitary cells for alleged breach of discipline. They are said to have been ordered to be put into fetters. Naren Babu, President of the Perojpur Sub-Divisional Committee, complained that the prisoners were "pulled by the ears". Khan Bahadur Moulvi Nemayet-ud-din who visited the prisoners is reported by the *Patrika* to have said that the cell prisoners were likely to suffer mental derangement if they were not removed from the cells. No doubt, even this inhumanity is to be defended in the interest of "law and order". Well may even Sir Hormusji Wadia declaim against such "law and order".

Thank God, that in spite of the trials Bengal is passing through, Babu Hardayal Nag, the President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee and Vice-President of the Khilafat Committee, was able to issue the following manifesto:

> I again congratulate the citizens of Calcutta on their calm and cool behaviour at the public meetings held yesterday. Civil disobedience is in its experimental stage. Its success entirely depends upon the success of non-violence. Naturally some crowds gathered. It is most satisfactory to note that the crowds never displayed any attitude of retaliation under the baton charge of the police. Our national workers calmly and fearlessly went on with the proceedings of the meetings in spite of police interference. As a matter of fact, there was no disturbance of any sort and non-violence triumphed once again in the public squares of Calcutta. . . .

A Bengali friend writes to ask whether Bengal which has produced the fierce school of anarchists will keep non-violent to the end. Manifestos such as the above and the self-restraint of the people to which it refers do indeed fill me with hope. The anar-

chists were after all lovers of their country. They were sick unto death of the unmanliness with which not long ago we submitted to every wrong and insult. They were tired of the "policy of mendicancy". But the fiercest anarchist's breast must swell with pride when he sees round him the wonderful manifestation of unexampled courage that is being shown by men and women, young and old. "Mendicancy" has given place to dignified self-assertion and civil defiance of authority that has entrenched itself behind arrogant repression. No other method could possibly hasten the country's progress by an inch or a second. We want more, not less, of the spirit of non-violence to enable us to finish the struggle. And I am sure that if there is still any one with a belief in the necessity of violence for India's salvation, he cannot but be deeply stirred by the quiet courage Bengal is exhibiting today.

An Embarrassing Release

Babu Bhagwandas has been suddenly and unconditionally released long before his time. He has my sincere sympathies. I was hoping to inform the public that Babu Bhagwandas was making literary researches and was quite happy in his solitude. Naturally he feels the discrimination made ostensibly in his favour but really against him. As he says in a public letter, if he deserved to be discharged, many others did likewise. Of those arrested in Banaras, he was certainly the arch offender. He drafted the notice about hartal, he had it printed, he instigated Prof. Kripalani to hawk the notices. Why should the author of all this mischief be discharged before his time? Thus cogently argues Babu Bhagwandas. But I doubt not that he will have many opportunities of courting the attention of the authorities. If the forcible dispersals of public meetings in Bengal, Punjab and elsewhere be an index of the mind of the authorities, we have to go through much greater heat than we have as yet done. The treatment we are receiving is after the Turkish bath style. In order to make it bearable the Government are taking us through a graduated series of heated chambers.

The Police Conference

The address delivered by Babu Purna Chandra Biswas, Deputy Superintendent of Police, as President of the All-India Police Conference held some time back in Calcutta, has not drawn the same amount of public attention as its importance deserves. Purna Babu has lucidly stated the whole case for the police. There is no doubt about the unpopularity of the police in India, and the present outrageous acts of repression have probably added to it.

But we must not forget that the police are mere instruments wielded by the Government. The President says:

> Here in India, the laws are made by Government and the people are of opinion that the laws are made to rule them, to control their natural aspirations and not for their benefit. We maintain the dignity of these laws and enforce them. That is one reason why we are so very unpopular.

Again—

> With the inauguration of the Reforms Scheme, the people have begun to realize that it is the laws that are unpopular and not the police, and that our only fault is that we are to carry out these unpopular laws.

The idea of ruling the people, of dominating them, of controlling their natural aspirations, as the President says, runs through the whole system of bureaucratic organization in India. And as that work is done more directly through the agency of the police, it is interesting to read the confession of a distinguished member of that service on the matter:

> When I speak of our unpopularity, I cannot refrain from uttering, though unpleasant it may be, that our conduct rules and the attitude of our superiors rather accentuate our estrangement from the public. We cannot accentuate our estrangement from the public. We cannot freely mix with them, independently invoke their hearty co-operation and sympathy, for which there is the greatest need for our duties; if we do so, we are, on flimsiest pretexts, looked upon with suspicion by superiors, even penalized and our promotions are stopped. I ask, comrades, who are responsible for this? I can at once say, we have absolutely no fault except that we belong to this unpopular department, and it is our superiors and conduct rules that widen this gulf.

But though the Government utilizes the Indian police in this way, does it treat them any the better on that account? The ban of racial inferiority sits upon them as tightly as upon the general mass of the people, as the long list of their grievances will show. It is producing restlessness in the service, indications of which are not wanting. The President thus cautiously expresses it:

> What will be the effect, if the subordinate police refuse to obey the command of their superior officer for dispersing or firing on a riotous mob? You may laugh at the idea, I too know that such a thing is impossible or, at least, undesirable. But no one knows how things change. You must not forget that the people of the country are no longer afraid of jail, and this spirit has also been imbibed by the subordinate police.

Purna Babu had to pay for all this outspokenness. He was summoned before Sir Henry Wheeler and ordered abruptly to join duty. But the delegates mildly demonstrated against the order and Purna Babu was triumphantly brought back from his train and taken in a procession to the Conference to finish the proceedings.

A Contradiction

The Hon'ble the Chief Commissioner of Delhi has taken the trouble of controverting the allegations[1] made in *Young India* of the 5th instant about jail treatment. In so far as the reply controverts specific charges about the Delhi Jail, I remain unconvinced. In so far as it refutes general charges, it is irrelevant. One may safely presume that food in the Delhi Jail, as also clothing, are no better than in the other jails. We have the testimony of Messrs Santanam and Desai to support Lala Shankarlal as to the quality of food issued. The wearer alone knows where the shoe pinches. Lala Shankarlal has made no charge about flogging. The correspondent, who sent his allegations, does not mention flogging in the Delhi Jail. He had only heard of flogging in some jails. Well, it has been officially admitted so far as the Punjab and Bengal are concerned. So far as Allahabad is concerned, Mr. Mahadev Desai's serious allegations remain uncontradicted. Discharge of prisoners in a state almost of nudity in Banaras also remains unchallenged. The shocking disclosures made by Dr. Gokul Chand tell their own tale. In all these circumstances, the Delhi Chief Commissioner's report can carry no weight in India. Nothing will please me better than to be able to admit that all my informants were wrong, and that there was no inhumanity in the treatment of prisoners in the Indian jails. Of the apologies, the written *Independent* is bringing out facts to show how they are extorted. Corroboration of a startling character comes from Bengal. And I am not prepared to disbelieve the charge brought by Lala Shankarlal about the Delhi Jail. Have not the Government stated that if the prisoners apologize they will be discharged? The days are gone of summary dismissal of charges, which are made after due sifting and with some sense of responsibility. No one in India will be perturbed or taken in by the language the Chief Commissioner has seen fit to use. He says, "The allegations contained in the article are couched in language so extravagant, that they are unlikely to convince the intelligent reader." This is what

1 *Vide* "Notes", 5-1-1922, under the sub-title "Jail Treatment".

I venture to call riding a high horse. The officials will have to come down from their pedestal of seclusion and exclusion, and mix and think with the common folk, if they wish to become their servants and friends. The Chief Commissioner would have done better if he had said that whilst hardships were inevitable in the initial stages, the authorities were doing their best to isolate the political prisoners and were giving them better treatment. This would have been a becoming and truthful statement. For, whether it is true of the Delhi Jail or not, I thankfully admit that in Agra, for instance, things have considerably improved. A large number of political prisoners from different places have been concentrated there, and are being humanely treated. The question of larger humanity still remains. The usual offenders are equally entitled to clean, sufficient clothing, clean and sufficient food and decent sanitary accommodation ensuring privacy. All these were lacking when Mahadev Desai was treated as an ordinary prisoner. It is not much comfort to find that he and his companions are now treated well. It was a bad use the U.P. Government made of his generous nature to have published the certificate of good treatment he issued when he began to be specially treated. I abide by every word that I published in *Young India* (5th January) of the inhumanity of treatment on his admission to the Naini Jail.

Young India, 26-1-1922

104. FRAUGHT WITH DANGER

Jhajjar is a tahsil town in the Rohtak district with a population of about 11,000. It has got a municipality with 4 nominated and 8 elected members. The President is elected. Yet the Municipality was not sympathetic towards popular activities. Therefore, the local Congress workers, rightly or wrongly, issued a notice upon the Municipality without any permission from the District Congress Committee, that if it did not make itself popular within 15th to 22nd January, the Congress Committee would take possession of the Town Hall. The Municipality ignored this notice altogether. On the other hand, the local leading worker, Pandit Sri Ram, was charged under Section 107, and sent to prison for a year by the D.C. on the 15th January, the first day of the allotted period. The Pandit unveiled a portrait of the Lokamanya[1] in the Town Hall on that day, for

[1] Bal Gangadhar Tilak

which the D.C. had given previous permission upon an application from the Municipality. After Pandit Sri Ram's imprisonment, the President of the local Congress Committee and the volunteers took possession of the Town Hall on the 16th. A regular guard of volunteers was set up. The volunteers took possession also of the four gates of the town and disturbed the octroi arrangement. As soon as this news reached Rohtak, I started for Jhajjar, for Lala Shyamlal was not present there, having gone to Ferozepur-Jhirka to attend a Congress Committee meeting. The people are even bent on violence. I advised them at night to remain non-violent, which produced some effect. But an influential preacher of non-violence is necessary to convert them. On the 18th night, at 8 p.m., some respectable citizens of the town called together the Congress workers and Municipal Commissioners and tried to settle the matter amicably. All the elected members excepting the President, who was absent, and two nominated members of the Municipality, agreed to resign. And it was decided also that the Town Hall would be under the control of the Congress Committee. However, the matter will be finally settled at noon today. The volunteers are still guarding the premises. The people have proclaimed by *panchayati* a social boycott of the six witnesses who stood against Pandit Sri Ram, viz., the Tahsildar, *Thanedar*, *Lambardar*, and the President, Vice-President and Secretary of the Municipal Committee. The Town Hall was erected with public subscription in memory of the late Queen Victoria. For some 5 or 6 years it remained uncared for, but now for the last ten years or so, the Municipality has taken charge of the building. If the settlement arrived at the conference of the 18th night is not observed, popular excitement will grow which may, I fear, ultimately lead to violence. The local leaders and volunteers are unbending. I am writing this at 10 a.m. on the 19th. Please guide us as to what to do by wire or by letter to the address at Rohtak.

Thus writes (the original is in Hindi) Lala Daulatram Gupta, acting President of Rohtak District Congress Committee. The action of the Congress workers in Jhajjar is audacious and inspiring. But it is fraught with the greatest danger. It has reached the border line of violence and indiscipline. I can fully appreciate the noble desire of the people to possess their own property. Municipalities are perhaps the greatest fraud palmed off upon India. The Government has hitherto used them for consolidating its power. But where the citizens are united, they can attain the municipal home rule in a moment. I have not yet described the quiet, orderly and evolutionary revolution that is going on in three big municipalities in the Bombay Presidency, viz., Ahmedabad, Surat and Nadiad. Of that, some other time. It is not as yet a completed picture. But Jhajjar will outpace the three municipalities, if it

remains steady and absolutely non-violent. Possession of the Town Hall can be retained without any ado, if the citizens of the place are unanimous. It cannot be retained, if there is real opposition. Any outbreak of popular violence will be a crime of the first magnitude, because it would be wanton and unprovoked. India, in the language of Maulana Abul Kalam, is the greatest Gurdwara; it is the largest Town Hall. And if we have not yet succeeded in possessing it, we may wait for the occupation of the Town Hall of Jhajjar. The Congress officers *must* surrender it, (1) if there is the slightest fear of violence, (2) if the elected members oppose the act of occupation, (3) if the Committee at Rohtak, or failing that, the Committee at Lahore vetoes the occupation, (4) if the police demand it at the point of the bayonet, unless the occupiers are prepared to die at their post without retaliation or resentment, and if the other citizens are certain not to get excited, impatient and violent.

The occupation appears to me to be a hasty act, but if it can be defended non-violently, the defect can be cured.

There is no harm in surrender. We shall gain strength by retracing every false or hasty step. What may have been taken wrongly, must be given up, and can be retaken by methodical work. In the case of Jhajjar, if the Town Hall has to be surrendered, it can be retaken by the elected members, who are in a majority, passing a resolution giving the use to the Congress Committee. If the elected members will not do so, the electors may, by a requisition, call upon the elected members to give effect to their views.

Social boycott of the witnesses who gave evidence against Pandit Sri Ram is clearly a mistake and will defeat its own end. We must not resort to social boycott of our opponents. It amounts to coercion. Claiming the right of free opinion and free action as we do, we must extend the same to others. The rule of majority, when it becomes coercive, is as intolerable as that of a bureaucratic minority. We must patiently try to bring round the minority to our view by gentle pursuasion and argument. Having been trained only to do things by order and under fear of punishment, we are likely, in the consciousness of strength we are daily acquiring, to repeat the mistakes of the rulers in an exaggerated form in our relations with those who may happen to be weaker than we are. That will be a worse state than the first.

I am aware that, by discussing Lala Daulatram Gupta's letter publicly, I am exposing the actors in the little drama in Jhajjar to misrepresentation and risk. The authorities can easily distort

and exaggerate the facts related, as they are often prone to do. But as the matter is of great importance, and as the workers have exposed themselves to greater risks than I can possibly expose them to, I have felt it my duty publicly to discuss the pros and cons of the act of occupation which, though fraught with danger, commands one's admiration for its bravery. Non-co-operators have burnt their boats. They have no secrets. But correspondents who wish to write in confidence are welcome to do so. I shall respect their confidence. But as all my work is done in open daylight, and as my post passes through the hands of many helpers, I would like to discountenance confidential correspondence as much as possible. Though the Government, be it said to their credit, have generally not tampered with my correspondence, the correspondents must also note that like all correspondence mine is equally at their mercy.

Young India, 26-1-1922

105. BEWARE OF OURSELVES

I gladly publish, though not without sorrow, a letter[1] from a Madras correspondent on the recent occurrences in that city. Evidently, the hooliganism was far more serious than described in the first impressions given by Dr. Rajan.[2] Mr. Rajagopalan is justified in blaming the non-co-operators.

It is difficult to distinguish between hooligans and non-co-operators when hundreds or thousands take part in smashing cars, swearing at innocent passengers or threatening a cinema-keeper. Non-co-operators cannot "have the cake and eat it too". They claim to be millions. They claim to have almost the whole of India at their back. We must either regulate our procedure in accordance with our creed or dissociate ourselves entirely from

[1] The letter, from V. R. Rajagopalan of Presidency College, Madras, is not reproduced here. The following are some excerpts: ". . . The Madras non-co-operators behaved in such a way that all were shocked. They molested those who wanted to go and see the Prince. Trams were blocked and the inmates were pelted with stones . . . The few tram-cars which had the audacity to run . . . were stopped, glass panes were broken, footboards were smashed to pieces, and one was about to be set on fire . . . Some girl-guides and lady students who were going in tram-cars were spat at, were abused in the most violent and vile language, and were molested . . . Scouts were deprived of their turbans and were also pelted with stones . . ."

[2] *Vide* "Hooliganism in Madras", 19-1-1922.

all mass activity, even if it involves self-ostracism. We have still many hartals to go through. Let Delhi, Nagpur and other places beware. I would advise them not to have any hartals at all, if they cannot, with certainty, avoid the disgraceful scenes enacted in Bombay and unfortunately repeated in Madras. I hope that the Madras Congress Committee will sift the matter thoroughly and take all the blame that attaches to it. After the frightful experience of Bombay, Madras should have been fully insured against all risk of mob violence. Mr. Rajagopalan's letter is fortified with another from an active non-co-operator. As he makes detailed charges giving names, I simply content myself with giving a few extracts. The writer says:

> An eye-witness to the mad excesses of that day, I shall be false to my creed of non-violence if I do not deplore the hartal as a miserable failure. The racial bitterness of the Puliantope days has revived. You have probably read the bitter speeches of the "non-Brahmin" leaders in their confederation. At a time when you are straining your every nerve to bring the Moderates round to your point of view, we in Madras have succeeded in widening the gulf between us and the non-Brahmins on the one hand, and the Adi Dravidas on the other. The least that we can do by way of reparation is a frank confession of our weakness, and a religious endeavour from now to promote inter-communal unity, specially between the *Panchamas* and others.

I do not hesitate to criticize the Government for sparing neither man, woman nor child. But the Government have no creed of non-violence to fetter their discretion. Their creed is terrorism in the last resort. But non-co-operators have to be above suspicion. Madras leaves much to be desired if the two letters referred to by me at all tell a true story. I have little doubt that it is in the main true. The non-co-operators and their friends have certainly not left man, woman or child free from their unholy attention. It was a bad augury of swaraj to have interfered with women, to have molested the poor scout boys, and otherwise played havoc with the liberty of the people, no matter how provoking their participation in the welcome to the Prince was.

We have more to fear from ourselves than from the violence or mistakes of the Government. The latter, if we use them aright, do us good, as they have already. Our own violence or untruth will be veritable death for us. If we are not able to set our own house in order, we shall certainly destroy ourselves. Non-co-operation will be a byword of execration and reproach.

In this connection I cannot help noticing a cutting given to me from the *Rangoon Daily News*. It runs:

> We are credibly informed that the wife of Nizamuddin, hackney carriage owner, East Rangoon, got a divorce from her husband on Thursday last on the ground that he disobeyed the *fatwa* in taking his *gharries* and persuading others to ply at the time of the Prince's visit.

I make bold to say that whoever granted the divorce (assuming the truth of the statement) grievously erred against the law of Islam and decency. Divorces are not so lightly granted in Islam. If hartals can be brought about by means such as the foregoing statement suggests, they can do no good whatsoever. They are no free expression of public opinion. But I am less concerned with the expedience of hartals than with the good name of Islam and non-co-operation. The law of non-co-operation demands perfect toleration and respect for the opposite opinion and action. The law of Islam, in so far as a non-Muslim can speak of it, requires equally strict toleration. Nothing could have so deeply hurt the Prophet as the intoleration of the people of Mecca during the early period of his ministry towards the new faith he was preaching. He could not possibly, therefore, at any time have been party to intolerance. "There shall be no compulsion in religion" must have descended to him when some of his new converts were more zealous than wise in the preaching of the new faith.

Whether we are Hindus or Mussulmans or what, does not matter. The spirit of democracy which we want to spread throughout India cannot be spread by violence whether verbal or physical, whether direct, indirect, or threatened.

Young India, 26-1-1922

106. POLES ASUNDER

The debate in the Assembly and the Council of State affords the clearest possible justification for my distrust of the Government and, therefore, any round table conference at the present moment.[1] The Government supporters consider the Congress demands to be impossible and repression to be the only way possible to put down non-co-operation. If I believed the Congress demands to be impossible and the use of force to be justifiable for putting down the pursuit of impossible ideals, I should also vote with the Government. I have, therefore, no difficulty about understanding and even appreciating the attitude of the Government and its supporters.

But I oppose the Government and thoroughly distrust it, because I so thoroughly understand its attitude. India can never attain freedom by going along the route the Government will take her.

Let us see.

Why is the Khilafat demand impossible? All that the Congress asks in effect is that the Government of India and the Imperial Government, if they wish to retain the people's co-operation, should work with them in getting the demands fulfilled. They should, therefore, perform that part of the obligation which rests with them, and vigorously prosecute the rest as if it was their own grievance. What will the Imperial Government do if France were to attempt to deprive England of Dover, and India were secretly to help France or openly to show indifference or hostility to England's struggle to retain Dover? Can Indians be expected to sit idle when the Khilafat is vivisected?

What is impossible about the Punjab demand? Why do they talk about the legalities of the case? If they will take care

[1] The following are excerpts from the report of this debate in *India in 1921-22*: " . . . The Delhi session of the Indian Legislature began in the middle of January . . . Among the most dramatic debates of the session was that initiated in the Legislative Assembly on Mr. Iswar Saran's motion for the immediate abandonment of the so-called "repressive" policy of Government. . . On the Government side, Sir William Vincent and Dr. Sapru made convincing and forceful speeches . . . Both the original motion and various amendments to it were decisively negatived. The Council of State endorsed the Assembly's approval of the policy of the Executive by rejecting a motion for a session of the two Houses to settle the lines of a round table conference . . . "

of the moralities, legalities will take care of themselves. As a boy, I learnt a legal maxim that where there is a conflict between Law and Equity, the latter should prevail. It is not with me a copy-book maxim. But I am told it is immoral to ask for the deprivation of a pension, which is but deferred pay. Why has Sardar Gauhar Singh been deprived of his "deferred pay" and why are the other pensioners threatened if they should take part in the present agitation? Does a servant who vilifies his employer receive pay or pension? Have Sir Michael O'Dwyer or General Dyer ever admitted their "error of judgment"? Why should the children of the murdered men of Jallianwala Bagh, or the men who were brutally flogged or made to crawl, although they had done no wrong, pay those who were responsible for these barbarities? I do not know a single principle of ethics, save that of might, that can justify the continuation of pensions to servants who are unrepentant. The viewpoints of the two parties are so different that what appears to be just and moral to the one, appears unjust and immoral to the other. I venture to claim that in asking for the stoppage of pensions, the Congress is just without being vindictive. It waives prosecution of impeachment. It waives penalties. It merely refuses still further to participate in the wrong by continuing to give pensions. The truth is that the Government still considers the two offenders to be distinguished servants of the Crown. *That* attitude has to be changed before a repetition of the Punjab becomes impossible.

As with the Punjab so with swaraj. It appears to the Government impossible to return to India what is hers. Reforms by instalments is the motto. The underlying idea is not to give anything unless it is absolutely necessary. The differences are so great that I dread to think of swaraj before the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs are put away. They seem so simple in the statement. But they are as difficult as swaraj because their redress means obedience to India's will.

This is all cold logic. There is nothing impossible about the demands. The impossibility consists in the unwillingness of the power-holders to part with the power that should never have been theirs.

Why should there be repression at all if only the Government will do their duty? Assume that violence is a certainty if mass civil disobedience is precipitated. Are the people to be balked of their rights for fear of violence? It does not strike the co-operators that they uphold injustice and add insult to it, when they accuse civil resisters of precipitating a crisis. The Govern-

ment are deliberately inviting a crisis. They are precipitating violence by removing everyone who has any influence over the people and who can keep them non-violent. Co-operators do not see that the action of the Government is like that of a man who refuses to give food to a hungry man and then threatens to shoot him whilst he is attempting to help himself.

In the midst of an enervating atmosphere such as ours, the duty before non-co-operators is clear. They must keep exemplary patience. They must not be goaded into precipitate action. They must refuse battle where they are not ready. It is no business of the Government to keep us non-violent or to help us to remain so. Even their method of restraining violence is exasperatingly violent. In one respect, however, we must feel thankful to them, for their protest and criticism amount to nothing but this, that we do not know how to practise our creed and that we are incompetent to inflict successful violence, even if we would. Let us admit both these arguments. We must be true to our creed. Then it is common cause that the Government must lay down arms. And let those who do not believe in the creed at least see that *India is neither ready nor willing to meet violence with violence.* I wish those who believe in the necessity of violence for India's freedom will realize the truth of my position. They must not think that because *they* are ready and willing to do violence, India is likewise ready or willing. I claim that India is unready, *not* because she is helpless *but* because she is unwilling. Therefore, non-violence is unexpectedly succeeding, whereas violence, in spite of the vaunted talk of human nature, would have failed. India's past training for ages, I mean the training of the masses, has been against violence. Human nature in India has advanced so far that the doctrine of non-violence is more natural for the people at large than that of violence. Let us also remember that the experiences of Bombay and Madras prove my proposition. If the people of India were violent by nature, there was enough in Bombay and Madras to give rise to an unquenchable conflagration. A little violence, like dirt, is enough to disturb or soil a peaceful or clean surface, but either being a foreign addition is soon removed. To train India for violence and thus to wrest swaraj by violence is a work of ages. I verily believe that this wonderful manifestation of energy and national consciousness is purely and simply due to the advent of non-violence. People have come to their own. Let no hasty action arrest its progress.

Young India, 26-1-1922

107. NON-PAYMENT OF TAXES

The idea of non-payment of taxes is in the air. The Andhras have made us more familiar with the cry than any other part of India. Whilst the Congress has given provincial autonomy to every province, I have ventured to warn the provinces against embarking upon a non-payment campaign till I had tried the experiment myself in some area under my own supervision.[1] I abide by that warning. I must also draw attention to the fact that we are not to start offensive civil disobedience till the 31st instant, or if it is sooner, till the Malaviya Conference Committee knows the result of its negotiations and knows that the proposed Round Table Conference is not to come off. Therefore, any suspension of taxes at the present moment can only be regarded as temporary holding back pending the result of the negotiations carried on by that Committee. But 31st January will be soon upon us. And it is necessary to consider the question of non-payment of taxes in all its bearings.

On this subject a friend who is in deep sympathy with the national movement, and who is a fairly accurate student of it, thus expresses his apprehensions:

> I have often thought to what extent the non-violent non-co-operation movement transgresses the religious limits, when it embarks on civil disobedience in the form of non-payment of taxes. I look upon the non-violent non-co-operation as essentially a spiritual movement. I know Mr. Gandhi does not think it otherwise. Will not the programme of the non-payment of taxes transgress the religious limit and lead to violence and bring into the movement people who are not as yet saturated with the principle of non-violence? Is not Mr. Gandhi holding out, however unconsciously, a material bait for his spiritual movement by which he means to conquer the Government? Recent events have shown that the temper of violence and the belief in violence are not eliminated from our character in the mass. And, therefore, it would be a leap in the dark fraught with disastrous consequences to carry out the programme of civil disobedience in the form of non-payment of taxes. I am, therefore, most anxious that Mr. Gandhi should not begin civil disobedience in this form as yet.

The validity of the objection lies in the statement that the non-payment campaign will bring into the movement people

[1] *Vide* "Letter to K. Venkatappayya", 17-1-1922.

who are not as yet saturated with the principle of non-violence. This is very true, and because it is true, non-payment does "hold out a material bait". It follows, therefore, that we must not resort to non-payment because of the possibility of a ready response. The readiness is a fatal temptation. Such non-payment will not be civil or non-violent, but it will be criminal or fraught with the greatest possibility of violence. Let us remember the experience of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru when the peasants, after they had taken the pledge of non-violence, told him that if he advised them to do violence, they would be certainly ready to do so. Not until the peasantry is trained to understand the reason and the virtue of *civil* non-payment and is prepared to look with calm resignation upon the confiscation (which can only be temporary) of their holdings and the forced sale of their cattle and other belongings, may they be advised to withhold payment of taxes. They must be told what happened in holy Palestine. The Arabs who were fined were surrounded by soldiers. Aeroplanes were hovering overhead. And the sturdy men were dispossessed of their cattle. The latter were impounded and left without fodder and even water. When the Arabs, stupefied and rendered helpless, brought the fine and additional penalty, as if to mock them, they had their dead and dying cattle returned to them. Worse things can and certainly will happen in India. Are the Indian peasantry prepared to remain absolutely non-violent, and see their cattle taken away from them to die of hunger and thirst? I know that such things have already happened in Andhra Desh[1]. If the peasantry in general knowingly and deliberately remain peaceful even in such trying circumstances, they are nearly ready for non-payment.

I say "nearly ready", for non-payment is intended to transfer the power from the bureaucracy into our hands. It is, therefore, not enough that the peasantry remain non-violent. Non-violence is certainly nine-tenths of the battle, but it is not all. The peasantry may remain non-violent, but may not treat the untouchables as their brethren; they may not regard Hindus, Mussulmans, Christians, Jews, Parsis, as the case may be, their brethren; they may not have learnt the economic and the moral value of the charkha and the khaddar. If they have not, they cannot gain swaraj. They will not do all these things after swaraj, if they will not do them now. They must be taught to know that the practice of these national virtues means swaraj.

[1] Andhra Province.

Thus civil non-payment of taxes is a privilege capable of being exercised only after rigorous training. And even as *civil* disobedience is difficult in the case of a habitual offender against the laws of the State, so is *civil* non-payment difficult for those who have hitherto been in the habit of withholding payment of taxes on the slightest pretext. Civil non-payment of taxes is indeed the last stage in non-co-operation. We must not resort to it till we have tried the other forms of civil disobedience. And it will be the height of unwisdom to experiment with non-payment in large or many areas in the beginning stages.

I hear the talk even of refusing payment of rent to zemindars. It must not be forgotten that we are not non-co-operating with zemindars, whether Indian or foreign. We are engaged in a fight with one big zemindar—the bureaucracy—which has made of us and the zemindars themselves serfs. We must try to bring round the zemindars to our side, and isolate the big zemindar. But if they will not come to us, we must be patient with them. We may not even proclaim a social boycott against them. That is to say, we may not refuse social service such as dhobi, barber, etc., to them. In areas under permanent settlement, therefore, there can be no non-payment campaign except in respect of cesses that might be payable directly to the Government. But the mention of zemindars merely shows the difficulties that beset us in the pursuit of no-tax campaign. All things considered, therefore, it is my deliberate opinion that the no-tax movement for the objects of the Congress should be for the time being left to me; meanwhile, workers can develop their own districts along constructive lines. They can discover various other methods of offering mass civil disobedience, and then, as the people become purified and enlightened, lead them on to non-payment.

As for the Andhras, where preparations on an intensive scale have already been made, I do not wish to damp the ardour of the worker. If they are satisfied that the people in the selected areas fulfil all the tests laid down at Delhi, and that they are capable of endless suffering without retaliation, I have nothing to say but to pronounce "God bless the brave Andhras". They must know the responsibility will be entirely theirs for any mishap that may occur. They will not be blamed by anybody if they do not take up the no-tax movement.

Young India, 26-1-1922

108. TERRORISM RUN MAD

I am giving the following summary of accounts[1] of repression gathered from various sources. In everyone of the cases, the reports are from the most responsible men one could think of. And yet some of the indecent savagery described by my correspondents seems almost to be unbelievable. But anything is possible in this land of affliction. I ask the reader to remain unmoved like me and rejoice with me in these sufferings. I invite every reader to pray with me that God will keep His promise not to try us beyond endurance and will always arm us with courage and patience to bear lightly the sufferings it may please Him to send us to. Nothing happens without His will. Let us keep to the pledge of non-violence and refrain from anger or ill will towards those that persecute us. Let us not also give *unnecessary* cause for irritation to the authorities. The irritation that comes from our lawful conduct such as refusal to shout *Sarkar ek hai*, or in abject fashion to bring our open palms together in the presence even of the mightiest, as has happened to Jairamdas, we must give even at the point of death.

Young India, 26-1-1922

109. HINDUS AND MOPLAHS

Though the letters on the Moplah trouble and the Mussulman attitude by Messrs Keshav Menon and others have already appeared in the Press, contrary to my wont I publish the two communications[2] for the importance that attaches to them. Possibly the fact of their publication in the pages of *Young India* will

[1] Published in *Young India*, under the following titles : "Desecration in Assam", "Inhumanity in Barisal", "Flogging in Sultanpur", "The Wail of Meerut", "Lawless Law in Chittoor" and "Filth at Narsinghpur Conference".

[2] Not reproduced here. The following are some excerpts from these :

"The resolution passed by the Khilafat Conference at Ahmedabad about the Moplahs of Malabar, and the telegram . . . by Maulana Abdul Bari Sahib . . . published in the *Servant* of Calcutta on 20th December, compel one to doubt if the Mohammedans or even Hindus outside Malabar have any correct knowledge of the happenings in this unhappy district. . . one would have expected a kind word from our Mohammedan friends for the unfortunate Hindu victims of the Moplah atrocities. . . . the Khilafat Conference, while congra-

be some balm for the wounds that the Moplah madness has inflicted on the Hindu heart. The writers were entitled to give vent to their pent up feelings.

Maulana Hasrat Mohani is one of our most courageous men. He is strong and unbending. He is frank to a fault. In his insensate hatred of the English Government and possibly even of Englishmen in general, he has seen nothing wrong in anything that the Moplahs have done. Everything is fair in love and war with the Maulana. He has made up his mind that the Moplahs have fought for their religion. And that fact (in his estimation) practically absolves the Moplahs from all blame. That is no doubt a travesty of religion and morality. But to do irreligion for the sake of religion is the religious creed of Maulana Hasrat Mohani. I know it has no warrant in Islam. I have talked to several learned Mussulmans. They do not defend Hasrat Mohani's attitude.

I advise my Malabar friends not to mind the Maulana. In spite of his amazingly crude views about religion, there is no greater nationalist nor a greater lover of Hindu-Muslim unity than the Maulana. His heart is sound and superior to his intellect, which, in my humble opinion, has suffered aberration.

The Malabar friends are wrong in thinking that the Mussulmans in general have not condemned or have in any way approved of the various crimes committed by the Moplahs. Islam protects, even in war, women, children and old men from molestation. Islam does not justify jehad except under well-defined conditions. So far as I know the law of Islam, the Mop-

tulating the Moplahs for the sacrifices of their lives in the cause of their religion, has not a word of condemnation for the atrocities committed by them on the Hindus . . . a true satyagrahi has no option but to proclaim the truth . . . Truth is infinitely of more paramount importance than Hindu-Muslim unity or swaraj . . . atrocities committed by the Moplahs on the Hindus are unfortunately too true . . . A few prominent Mussulman leaders, it is true, have condemned the Moplah atrocities . . . But, how far have the Mussulmans in general, exerted to undo the wrongs committed by their co-religionists in Malabar?"

". . . Maulana Mohani justifies the looting of Hindus by Moplahs as lawful by way of commandeering in a war between the latter and the Government . . . Maulana perhaps does not know that . . . There was no adversary to the Moplahs at the time whom the Hindus could possibly have helped or invited, and the attack on them was most wanton and unprovoked. . . . Maulana justifies the other barbarities committed by the rebels on the ground that they were more by way of retaliation on the Hindus who were suspected to have invited the military or aided them. . . . Does not the Maulana realize that such opinions emanating from him are bound to have disastrous consequences?"

lahs could not, on their own initiative, declare jehad. Maulana Abdul Bari has certainly condemned the Moplah excesses.

But what though the Mussulmans did not condemn them? Hindu-Muslim friendship is not a bargain. The very word friendship excludes any such idea. If we have acquired the national habit, the Moplah is every whit a countryman as a Hindu. Hindus may not attach greater weight to Moplah fanaticism than to Hindu fanaticism. If instead of the Moplahs, Hindus had violated Hindu homes in Malabar, against whom would the complaint be lodged? Hindus have to find out a remedy against such occurrences, as much as the Mussulmans. When a Hindu or a Mussulman does evil, it is evil done by an Indian to an Indian, and each one of us must personally share the blame and try to remove the evil. There is no other meaning to unity than this. Nationalism is nothing, if it is not at least this. Nationalism is greater than sectarianism. And in that sense we are Indians first and Hindus, Mussulmans, Parsis, Christians after.

Whilst, therefore, we may regret Maulana Hasrat Mohani's attitude on the Moplah question, we must not blame the Mussulmans as a whole, nor must we blame the Maulana as a Mussulman. We should deplore the fact that one Indian does not see the obvious wrong that our other brethren have done. There is no unity, if we must continuously look at things communally.

Critics may say, "All this is sheer nonsense, because it is so inconsistent with facts. It is visionary." But my contention is that we shall never achieve solidarity unless new facts are *made* to suit the principle, instead of performing the impossible feat of changing the principle to suit existing facts. I see nothing impossible in Hindus, as Indians, trying to wean the Moplahs, as Indians, from their error. I see nothing impossible in asking the Hindus to develop courage and strength to die before accepting forced conversion. I was delighted to be told that there were Hindus who did prefer the Moplah hatchet to forced conversion. If these have died without anger or malice, they have died as truest Hindus because they were truest among Indians and men. And thus would these men have died even if their persecutors had been Hindus instead of Mussulmans. Hindu-Muslim unity will be a very cheap and tawdry affair, if it has to depend upon mere reciprocation. Is a husband's loyalty dependent upon the wife's, or may a wife be faithless because the husband is a rake? Marriage will be a sordid thing when the partners treat their conduct as a matter of exchange, pure and simple. Unity is like marriage. It is more necessary for a husband to draw closer to his wife when she is

about to fall. Then is the time for a double outpouring of love. Even so is it more necessary for a Hindu to love the Moplah and the Mussulman more, when the latter is likely to injure him or has already injured him. Unity to be real must stand the severest strain without breaking. It must be an indissoluble tie.

And I hold that what I have put before the country in the foregoing lines is a simple selfish idea. Does a Hindu love his religion and country more than himself? *If* he does, it follows that he must not quarrel with an ignorant Mussulman who neither knows country nor religion. The process is like that of the world-famed woman who professed to give up her child to her rival instead of dividing it with the latter—a performance that would have suited the latter admirably.

Let us assume (which is not the fact) that the Mussulmans really approve of all that the Moplahs have done. Is the compact, then, to be dissolved? And when it is dissolved, will the Hindus be any better off for the dissolution? Will they revenge themselves upon the Moplahs by getting foreign assistance to destroy them and their fellow Mussulmans, and be content to be for ever slaves?

Non-co-operation is a universal doctrine, because it is as applicable to family relations as to any other. It is a process of evolving strength and self-reliance. Both the Hindus and Mussulmans must learn to stand alone and against the whole world, before they become really united. This unity is not to be between weak parties, but between men who are conscious of their strength. It will be an evil day for Mussulmans if, where they are in a minority, they have to depend for the observance of their religion upon Hindu goodwill and *vice versa*. Non-co-operation is a process of self-realization.

But this self-realization is impossible, if the strong become brutes and tread upon the weak. Then, they must be trodden under by the stronger. Hence, if Hindus and Mussulmans really wish to live as men of religion, they must develop strength from within. They must be both strong and humble. Hindus must find out the causes of Moplah fanaticism. They will find that they are not without blame. They have hitherto not cared for the Moplah. They have either treated him as a serf or dreaded him. They have not treated him as a friend and neighbour, to be reformed and respected. It is no use now becoming angry with the Moplahs or the Mussulmans in general. Whilst Hindus have a right to expect Mussulman aid and sympathy, the problem is essentially one of self-help, i.e., development of strength from

within. It would be a sad day for Islam if the defence of the Khilafat was to depend upon Hindu help. Hindu help is at the disposal of the Mussulmans, because it is the duty of the Hindus, as neighbours, to give it. And whilst Mussulmans accept help so ungrudgingly given, their final reliance is and must be upon God. He is the never-failing and sole Help of the helpless. And so let it be with the Hindus of Malabar.

Young India, 26-1-1922

110. REPRESSION IN ANDHRA

By the time this is in print, probably all eyes will be turned towards Andhra Desh. Its plucky people are preparing to offer mass civil disobedience in certain tahsils and are consequently deferring payment of tax for the time being. I have warned the Andhra Committee that if the Round Table Conference comes off, those who are deferring payment of taxes due will have immediately to pay them and that they should prepare for the difficult fight only if the people are thoroughly disciplined for non-violence and are otherwise able to conform to the conditions named by the All-India Congress Committee at Delhi.[1] Mr. Venkatappayya, however, informs me that the people are disciplined and ready and that they can fulfil the conditions laid down. The Government of Madras are evidently seized with nervous fear over these suspensions. They are drafting additional police to Guntur and making demonstrations. They are suspending the operation of the ordinary method of tax collection and have threatened to adopt a summary procedure. They are reported even to be arming themselves with extraordinary powers. In those circumstances, I offer no apology for presenting the readers of *Young India* with the following report[2] of repression received from the Secretary of the Provincial Committee. The report covers the period between 3rd January to 15th January. The report enables the reader to understand the inwardness of the movement and the measure of sacrifice the Andhra people are preparing for. May God give them courage, powers of endurance and wisdom to do the right thing at the right time.

Young India, 26-1-1922

[1] *Vide* "Letter to K. Venkatappayya", 17-1-1922, and "Telegram to K. Venkatappayya and Others", Before 20-1-1922.

[2] Not reproduced here

111. SPEECH AT SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, AHMEDABAD[1]

January 26, 1922

I am going today to Bardoli for the preparation of successfully carrying out the programme of civil disobedience and non-payment of taxes. I shall be back here in a week, maybe a month, or a year, or perhaps I may not return at all. But one thing is certain : we shall either win swaraj for India or we shall die. India is slowly getting to be a holy land, aye, a purified country. When truth is on our side, is defeat ever possible? There is salvation or *moksha* today. [Lay] down your life gladly for truth. If somebody asked me, "Where is Brahman[2], what is it like?" then I shall change this query and say, "Where is truth or *satya*, what is it like"? Truth is Brahman. Everybody after getting up early in the morning should pray to God at least for a minute : "Oh! Almighty God! Give me strength to die for my religion, to die for the whole world". There is no salvation in death when dying, there is salvation in death when dying willingly, when dying gladly. Remember what Shri Krishna told Arjuna about the *Sthitaprajna*[3] in the second chapter of the *Gita*. Try to live like that. There is pleasure and happiness in living, if God gives us strength to die willingly and gladly while suffering innumerable hardships and tyrannies. God has given me strength to die for my country and for my religion.

There is a sort of contentment in self-denial. Last night I was reading a book by Prof. Vaswani[4]. When writing about self-denial he has given the instance of Rana Pratap Singh[5]. His thoughts are very beautiful. The self-denial of Pratap was very great. After the fall of Chittor and when he found it impossible to recapture it, what was the promise that he exacted from his loyal standards? That was the promise of self-denial on their part : "Until Chittor secures its independence, we shall not enjoy

[1] For Gandhiji's comments on this report, *vide* "Notes", 9-2-1922, under the sub-title "Too Sacred for Publication".

[2] The Absolute

[3] The man of steady intellect

[4] T. L. Vaswani (1879-1966); sage from Sind; author and founder of the Mira educational institutions, Poona

[5] Of Mewar, who fought bravely against the Moghul power in India for many years and never submitted to it

any luxuries, we shall sleep on mother earth, we shall eat only roots and nuts, we shall give up all earthly happiness and practise complete self-denial". That was their resolve. I call Rana Pratap Singh a *Sthitaprajna*. Let everyone practise self-denial and be a *Sthitaprajna*.

The Hindu, 2-2-1922

112. NORTH-SOUTH

From the discussions about a settlement which took place in the two Houses of the Central Legislature, we can see that our position and that of the Government are as far apart as the North Pole and the South. This is precisely why I have said that negotiations with the Government at this juncture are useless. The Government is still power-drunk. It still hopes to suppress [the movement] with the power of its guns. It has no faith in the strength of our convictions or in our capacity for sacrifice. And, as long as the Government hopes to suppress us, even if it agrees to negotiate with us for a settlement, it will be in the manner of a master negotiating with his servant.

The supporters of the Government say that our demand is so absurd that it cannot possibly be conceded. Calling something impossible[1] does not make it impossible. Or, rather, in one case, the thing may be impossible for want of inclination and in another for lack of ability.

The Government has never been able to explain what is impossible in the demand about the Khilafat. Its impossibility lies wholly in the Government's guilty intention, its unwillingness to grant the demand. What is there impossible in the British vacating Arabia? What impossibility or obstacle can there be in returning its territory to Turkey? If the British people cannot tolerate this, then India will have to consider whether she should not sever the British connection completely. The Government's unwillingness to satisfy the Khilafat demand certainly cannot be advanced as a valid argument.

The same is true about the Punjab issue. Which demand of ours about the Punjab is impossible for the Government to concede? As regards pension, Maulana Shaukat Ali and Sir Michael O'Dwyer were on the same footing as officers. Yet the Government did not consult anyone when stopping Maulana Shaukat Ali's

[1] *Vide* Appendix I.

pension, while it cannot bring itself to stop the pensions of Sir Michael O'Dwyer and General Dyer. The reason is not far to seek. Those whom the Government believes to be good men and pillars of its rule, we regard as enemies. It does not wish to forget the past services of Sir Michael O'Dwyer and General Dyer, while in our opinion these services are of no value at all, and the thought of their disloyalty to India shown in the Punjab in 1919 is even today painful to us.

This is also true about the demand for swaraj. We want swaraj today, whereas the Government asks us to wait till we are fit for it.

Thus, there is a great gulf between us on every issue. There is no possibility of its disappearing till we are fully tested. If, therefore, a conference for a settlement is held before the two sides have come to see eye to eye, one may welcome it, but let no one hope for a happy outcome.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 29-1-1922

113. ENROLMENT OF VOLUNTEERS

It is observed that the work of enrolling volunteers is not going on as vigorously as it ought to be. The Provincial Congress Committee office does not overflow with candidates wishing to be enrolled as volunteers, as its ticket-counter was raided during the Congress Week. There used to be such a demand for tickets for admission to the meetings of the Subjects Committee that the President and the Secretary went almost crazy. Whom should they oblige and whom not? Why should not enrolment of volunteers, too, proceed with the same speed?

Some say that, if the condition regarding khadi is omitted, enrolment will be faster. Personally, I do not believe that it will be so. No one who wishes to enrol himself as a volunteer will object to khadi. It can never be that a volunteer who offers to take a pledge to be ready to die will hesitate to wear khadi or that he will not buy khadi worth Rs. 5 or Rs. 10, if necessary. A man will even borrow this amount and become a volunteer. Do not some men incur debts in order to indulge their addictions? Why, then, should it not become an addiction with us to go and enrol ourselves as volunteers?

Some say that, if the pledge about untouchability is omitted, a large number will come forward to be enrolled. This, too, is not

correct. There is, I believe, little question here of expense or inconvenience; the main thing required is a change of heart. We cannot enter the heaven of swaraj, leaving the untouchables behind. This objection, however, merely illustrates the saying: "Unwilling to dance, one finds fault with the courtyard."

Moreover, neither I nor even the Working Committee has the power to grant exemptions from conditions. The resolution was passed by the Congress and can be modified by it alone. And I for one regard the very idea of getting it modified as cowardice.

Again, every condition included in the pledge is a matter of principle. How can anyone alter principles? The exemption provided for at the Delhi session relates to the condition of wearing hand-woven cloth produced in one's own district. The Working Committee c'n permit a district in the Punjab which cannot itself produce woollen cloth, to import cloth of hand-spun wool from another district or province. But can anyone grant exemption in the matter of untouchability or non-violence or in regard to the question of unity among Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Christians and others? Those who really want to enrol themselves as volunteers and are eager to go to jail can observe all the conditions easily.

Hence, if we get the names of only a few volunteers in Gujarat, I shall merely conclude that more persons do not want to register their names, or that most people do not like the manner in which the movement is being carried on.

But it is far better that people should not register their names because of lack of faith in the conditions in the pledge than that they should ignore those conditions and register. Only those who are prepared to fulfil *in toto* the conditions of the pledge should register their names, no matter if their number is small. A few sincere people may by and by become many. But it will certainly not benefit us ultimately to have a large number of volunteers who have enrolled themselves half-heartedly. It is the duty of a workman, when a building is under construction, to take regular measurements and check whether it is coming up according to plan.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-1-1922

114. GOVERNMENT'S CIVILITY

There is advantage in seeing the virtues even of an enemy. There certainly is goodness in it. But a complacent person who believes that the enemy can have no virtue will invite defeat.

The Government knows that there is the possibility of a real struggle in Bardoli. The Collector, therefore, has issued an "explanation", which is interesting. The Government could have called it a "notification", instead of giving it the civilized title of "explanation". It has, however, chosen to offer an "explanation" to the people. There cannot be greater civility even in the bulletin of the Provincial Congress Committee than is to be found in this "explanation". The very arguments advanced are those which a non-co-operator would use.

The explanation is signed by "H. B. Shivdasani". He is, of course, one of us. It should not be surprising if he has issued such a courteous explanation on his own initiative. Indian officers would not be doing anything extraordinary if, though servants of the Government, they learn to be civil.

If, however, the language of the explanation has been chosen by an English officer, and deliberately, I regard the fact as an important change and as an auspicious beginning for our struggle. It is not a small thing that both the parties can fight, standing firm on their ground and yet with courtesy and without ceasing to be civilized. We would like such a fight to go on for ever. Our poets showed their culture in their descriptions of even the battles between Rama and Ravana. They have depicted Mandodari[1] as a virtuous wife. After Meghnada's[2] death, Ramachandra gave all facilities desired by Sulochana[3]. Valmiki[4], the father of poets, as also the devotional poet Tulsidas[5], have unreservedly praised the *tapascharya* of Ravana and others.

It is my ambition that we should fight such a civilized war. No other manner of fighting will become a non-co-operator. Incivility is a kind of violence. As long as we, who profess to be under the pledge of non-violence, remain bound by that pledge,

[1] Ravana's wife

[2] Ravana's son

[3] Meghnada's wife

[4] Author of the first *Ramayana*

[5] Author of the *Ramacharitamanasa* in Hindi

we are positively obliged to maintain civility, both Hindus and Muslims. And if one side maintains civility up to the end, it is certain ultimately to influence the other party. I feel inclined to see the beginning of such civility in this explanation. The Government is welcome to take possession of our fields or shoot us in a civilized manner.

After this preface, I give the "explanation" below:[1]

While welcoming this explanation, I merely wish to say that not a single *Patidar* of the Bardoli taluka has been kept in the dark. All men and women have been told that the Government

1. can sell the entire crop,
2. can give away for a song a crop worth lakhs,
3. can remove even cattle, and household utensils,
4. can confiscate even *Inami* lands,
5. can imprison people,
6. can cut off railway, telegraphic and postal communications, surround the Bardoli taluka, and try to wear out the people by blockading them thus. The people may fight only if they can bear all these hardships.

Further, the people of Bardoli have also been told that, if on the whole they remain firm in their determination, adhere to truth, preserve complete peace, shed all fear, remain united among themselves, keep up complete non-co-operation, maintain friendly relations with the *Dheds* and *Bhangis* and do not regard them as untouchables, adopt complete swadeshi and wear only hand-spun, hand-woven cloth and spin and weave the required cloth in Bardoli itself, then not even a hair of theirs will be touched and they will not only get back their confiscated lands but will also end others' sufferings and, themselves becoming free, play a big part in liberating the whole country.

In this struggle, there is no place for hypocrisy, outward show and falsehood, and nothing should be kept hidden. All should fight with their own strength or rely on God. People should, therefore, take every step after careful consideration. The cultivators of the Bardoli taluka are thoughtful men. I believe that they are prepared to suffer anything and to be ruined for the sake of their country, and that is why I pay them compliments everyday.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 29-1-1922

[1] Not reproduced here

115. USUAL PRACTICE

New Year for Congress

Congressmen ought to realize that those who wish to keep the Congress alive should pay up the annual tax. If everyone does not pay even four annas, then the Congress cannot meet this year. The organization will pass under the control of those who pay this sum. Just as the strength of the Congress is in its volunteers, so also is it in its four-anna members. What counts is not the four annas but the membership. I am afraid that a crore of members were not enrolled on the Congress register last year. Whether or not this number was enrolled, if the Congress is a living organization and if the people have come to take interest in it in the course of one year, then this time more people should come forward to get themselves enrolled. The greater the number of members, the greater the strength of the Congress.

Moreover, this year young persons of the age of 18 also can get themselves enrolled. Both men and women are entitled to do so. I earnestly hope that no man or woman who has attained the age of 18, to whom swaraj is dear and who wishes to secure swaraj through non-violence and truth, will fail to get his or her name enrolled at the taluka or the village Congress office. If people have genuine enthusiasm and feeling for the Congress, it should not at all be necessary to engage volunteers for this work. By paying the small sum of four annas, people declare their faith in the Congress.

Congress Funds

When people get their names registered in this way, the Congress of course gets some money from the fee collected. But the principal benefit of the money so received goes to the respective taluka [Congress] committee. The Congress plainly needs money for other expenditure. Let us take the instance of Gujarat itself. It may be said that a good amount was collected in Gujarat last year. We spent all that we had collected. It was of course necessary to do so, and this was exactly what was expected. There have to be fresh collections for the new year. Certainly, money is required for activities such as swadeshi, uplift of the *Antyajas*[1],

[1] A backward Hind Community, traditionally looked upon as untouchables, later described by Gandhiji as Harijans, God's folk

education, etc. If we do not again collect money this year, our work cannot proceed. I hope, therefore, that those who wish to encourage the activities of the Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee will themselves send in their own contributions. Anyone who desires may earmark his contribution, that is to say, he can send it to be credited to any specific account which he chooses. I hope that those readers of *Navajivan* who wish to contribute will send as much as they can. The contributions of those who send them through *Navajivan* will be acknowledged in the paper. I must remind everyone that the Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee has published a statement of accounts regarding every pie. The expenditure incurred has been only as sanctioned by the sub-committees of the [G.P.C.] Committee. The best justification of the money spent are the Vidyapith, the schools affiliated to it and the Swadeshi Department with its branches, in which the entire collection has been invested. The days when people's money was spent over foreign newspapers and in such other ways are gone. If we wish to support the two big activities, the Vidyapith and swadeshi, we have no choice but to collect funds.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 29-1-1922

116. MY NOTES

AHMEDABAD, NADIAD AND SURAT

The fight of these municipalities is developing very well. The way it is developing holds a lesson for the country. If the citizens of these three cities extend full support to their representatives, they will be able to demonstrate what local self-government is. It is easy to develop local self-government into national self-government. The means for securing both are the same. The effect of both is also the same. For winning local self-government, residents of the particular area have to make sacrifices, while for national self-government all the people in the country have to do so. Who can stop these three municipalities from becoming absolutely independent? Instead of people paying taxes to the municipalities set up by the Government, there is nothing illegal in their paying them only to representatives freely elected by them, nor need they fight anyone in doing so. Power, then, will of itself fall into their hands. There will be the same representatives, the same building, the same employees and the same laws even (if you choose); all

you have to do is not to recognize the Government's authority. This is called peaceful revolution or new birth. The people have merely to examine their hearts. The way in which the municipalities have functioned till now only shows that, really speaking, the people have taken no interest in their work. All sorts of men got into them in the name of the people and served only themselves or the Government. I do not mean that the people did not benefit at all from such municipalities. They have got street lights, their latrines are kept clean, and they have also received medical facilities. Yet the people have not come to feel that the municipalities are their own. The people of Ahmedabad never came to look upon the Municipality's income as their own, as they do the *mahajans*[1]. The members hardly took interest in its meetings. Now in all the three cities they have started attending meetings and taking keen interest in the proceedings. They have not acquired full self-confidence as yet, else they would be masters of the entire administration. The only difference is that today, if the people do not pay taxes, action can be taken against them while, after the control of the Government has disappeared, they may pay only if they choose. Only taxes paid in this way are paid voluntarily.

We are no strangers to such a tradition. Till recently, we used to pay our community levies with pleasure. We pay the *mahajans'* taxes first. Only, there was no political awakening till now; people did not take interest in that field. Unlike now, men of affairs of all communities did not take up such work. When all communities start taking interest in it, swaraj will be a certainty, without our making the slightest effort for it. There is oppression only when a few desire to rule the many. This is a general rule. The many do not have to coerce a few, or the subtle violence implicit in the very fact of a majority suffices for the purpose. India is the only country in which the mass of the people, though they have become conscious, regard themselves as weak.

Is there anything which these municipalities cannot do? Are we not capable of looking after the lighting of our cities, their streets, latrines, homes for the disabled, etc.? Who kept the latrines of Khadi Nagar clean? Who built the township, planned roads in it, set up catering arrangements, provided for medical attendance and guarded the huts at night? Who controlled all that traffic there? Reckon up in terms of time, work and the number of men, and you will get the measure of swaraj achieved. We ourselves assume,

[1] Traditional representative bodies looking after the affairs of a community or a professional or business group

without reason, that we lack ability. Can anyone else point out a remedy?

I earnestly hope that the residents of the three cities will take the utmost interest in the work of the municipalities, encourage their representatives and emerge victorious in the unnecessary dispute with the cities which the Government has started, and thus win their freedom.

Our Protection

Since we want to be independent of the protection afforded by the Government's power, we have necessarily to think out how we might ensure our protection. So far, the Government's police, its military, its guns and swords protected us. Who will do so when the Government leaves? Who will protect us from the danger of robbers and dacoits? So long as such questions are asked, we are fit neither for swaraj nor do we deserve to be called men.

Why cannot we protect our cities and villages right now? The seven-and-a-half lakh villages of India ask no such questions. They are not protected by the Government. Villages manage to protect themselves and those which are unable to do so get robbed even today. Even the Government has not protected villages, no one can protect them, against internal disorders. They ought to be ready to protect themselves or train themselves for the purpose.

From every town and village, persons should come forward as volunteers whose job it would be to protect the people and who would do night-patrolling. In this matter, too, no one can restrain us. Only, the people themselves need to get ready for this work.

It requires not arms but courage. One who is awake is in less danger of being robbed. Obviously, all cannot keep awake day and night, and hence some should be ready to do night-patrolling. Lights and patrolling, these two, are enough to keep cities safe.

In addition to this, we should also take other steps for reforming people. We should seek out thieves and, instead of punishing them, try to educate them. Once we have met a thief personally, he will not probably dare to commit thefts again. Those for whom stealing is a profession are likely to give trouble, but the effect of the general purification is sure to be felt by them too. It is for sadhus to reinforce this. If they become true sadhus, they will certainly attach the utmost importance to this work. Sadhus should mix among members of communities which regard robbery, dacoity, etc., as their profession and should rescue them from their

evil ways. They should persuade them to take up other work. The point is that we should regard even these people as brothers instead of as enemies, and serve them. The habit of stealing is also a kind of disease. Presuming that, being a psychological disease, it is more difficult to treat, we have not undertaken its diagnosis and treatment. We treat a person who has indigestion or fever, or is sick. Why, then, do we not treat one who steals, prevaricates or deceives, as if he were ill? Why do we not seek a remedy other than sending him to jail? Why do we not punish one who is ill in body, instead of treating him with medicine? Personally, I believe that both deserve compassion or both merit punishment.

But, in our indolence, we have stopped thinking and so we assume that the rule, "Jaggery for one and oil-cake for another"[1], is an immutable law. When we have come forward to win swaraj for India through non-violent non-co-operation, we shall indeed have to seek remedies for even robbery and other like dangers through peaceful methods, and such remedies are certainly possible.

The Government too teaches us this. Since it punishes, it also enlists, to some extent, the help of institutions like the Salvation Army for reforming communities which are given to robbery and other evil ways. We are in a better position than the Government to undertake this task, for we have the whole class of sadhus and fakirs for the purpose. If its members cultivate the qualities of true sadhus and fakirs, they can be of the utmost help in this work. Let no one think that organized efforts are necessary for this purpose. Inhabitants of every village or town in which national awakening has taken place should, without waiting for a lead from others, make arrangements for their protection and undertake the work of reforming [the thieves]. If this is satisfactorily done even at a few places, the practice will spread to other villages.

An Englishwoman's Blessings

An Englishwoman writes from Calcutta:[2]

I naturally feel embarrassed in publishing this letter. It contains compliments to me. But I hope that I have no vanity in me. I can see my weaknesses. However, I have unshakable faith in God and His power and mercy. I am merely clay in the hands of the Great Potter. My duty, therefore, is to offer up that praise to Him. For me, the only meaning of this lady's blessings is that they may strengthen me.

[1] A Gujarati saying

[2] For the letter, not reproduced here, *vide* "Notes", 26-1-1922, under the sub-title "An English Lady Blesses".

My aim, however, in publishing this letter is that it may inspire sincere non-co-operators to remain firm on the path of non-violence and to dissuade those among them who are misguided from taking to the path of violence. I believe that our non-violence is sure to produce on others the effect which it has had on these Englishwomen[1].

But, then, hatred must be eliminated from our struggle. This has its source in love, not hatred or anger. We wish to turn even enemies into friends. I am sure that if we work without hatred, even stony hearts will be melted by our capacity to suffer. The cause of the delay lies in our own deficiencies. If we continue to suffer with a calm mind, we shall gain complete victory in a very short time.

But we did wrong things in Madras, as also in Bombay. Our minds are not free from anger. Even now our non-violence is not that of the strong, it is only a sign of our weakness. If we recognize our numerical strength, we shall become watchful. As Maulana Mahomed Ali says, thirty crores need not fear one lakh. If they do, the fault must be theirs. When they have shed fear, they will have swaraj in their hands. Moreover, if thirty crores seek to gain their object by threatening a lakh, there will be no greater sinners than they. We can, therefore, show even our manliness only by suffering.

Even if only a handful of us Indians have awakened and the rest are slumbering, we should not have recourse to violence. In that case, we should know that our task is to awaken the slumbering.

Thus, from whatever point of view we consider our position, we shall see that we have to work in a spirit of non-violence and love. As things are, however, on the one hand we wish to go to jail and, on the other, seek to intimidate courts by our shouting. I still receive complaints that at some places, when a non-co-operator's case is being heard, people fill the court-room to capacity. No wonder, then, if courts change their venue and sit in jail.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 29-1-1922

[1] The correspondent and another Englishwoman whom she had mentioned in her letter and who had written earlier in the same strain. Her letter was published in *Young India* of 12-1-1922.

117. AWAKENING IN ANDHRADESHA

January 29, 1922

To the date of writing, the following two telegrams[1] have been received at the *Young India* office from the Secretary of the Provincial Congress Committee:

1. The Andhra Provincial Congress Working Committee met yesterday at Guntur. . .Several ryots from different parts of the district. . .also attended the meeting. . .A graphic description was given how many male adults, including very aged men, enlisted themselves as volunteers in each one of the 50 villages in the neighbourhood of Pedarandipadu and how everyone, fully clad in khaddar, has been serving and observing strict non-violence in spite of provocation sometimes given by the military drafted there, the attachments of movables and high-handed removal of carts and bulls even without a show of distraint. They have also stated that in almost all villages, all the village officers. . .have resigned their appointments. Accounts of resignations of village officers in other areas also were given. The Working Committee after prolonged deliberation as a measure of special caution adopted the following resolution: "This Committee is of opinion that the Guntur District Congress Committee should, instead of carrying on the campaign of non-payment of taxes in several talukas simultaneously as previously resolved by them, limit the area and appoint a committee to investigate as to how far the Delhi conditions are satisfied in the said area and resolve on the question of final refusal of taxes in accordance with the opinion of the said committee."

2. Guntur Congress Committee met day before yesterday. . .for the purpose of considering, amongst other things, the resolution of the Working Committee of the Provincial Congress Committee of the 25th on the question of non-payment of taxes. . . .Leading ryots from different talukas in the district and some Congress workers also attended the meeting. Having been invited to explain the situation in their respective talukas and *fircas*, representative ryots gave accounts of the progress of the movement among the people. Most of them showed their determination to carry on the campaign in spite of all difficulties, while some expressed that some of the conditions of the Delhi resolution had not been fully satisfied in the *fircas* to which they belonged, and that there was need for further preparation in the matter of untouchability, and in one or two even in

[1] Only excerpts reproduced here

respect of non-violence. Mr. Prakasam[1] addressed the meeting dwelling at some length on the responsibility of the step taken up by the people of the District. He quoted and explained the letter of Mahatmaji regarding non-payment of taxes published in *The Bombay Chronicle* of the 26th[2]. Mr. Venkatappayya stated that the necessity for conveying this arose out of the letter addressed to him by Mahatmaji and subsequent correspondence with him. Delhi resolution referred to areas where intensive preparations had been made. . . .

The following is the Associated Press message about the Government preparations:

> In regard to the state of affairs in Guntur where civil disobedience and non-payment of taxes campaign and resignation of village officers are in operation, Madras Government propose to undertake emergency legislation in the direction of amending Madras Revenue Recovery Act (2 of 1864) mainly to do away with intervening period allowed under the present Act between distraint and attachment of property and to bring at once to sale effects of ryot who refuses to pay his dues. Other steps will also be taken by Government on the executive side, such as institution of disobeying area [*sic*] subject to such exemptions as may be ordered by the Government in favour of persons who shall, by date to be prescribed, have paid into Government treasury or to officer appointed for the purpose taxes due from them. Where land is bought in by Government owing to combination to prevent bidding, opportunity will be taken to provide land for members of depressed classes. With regard to resignations of village officers, the Government say they cannot be accepted under the circumstances and if officers refuse to carry on duties, they must be dismissed.

In my opinion, the Government has the right to take precautionary measures of the kind foreshadowed. It has the right to suspend ordinary legislation when it is threatened with combined suspension of its revenue. That a wise Government would not exasperate public opinion into refusal to pay taxes is, of course, true. But a Government that rides roughshod over popular opinion, cannot be expected to allow itself to be extinguished without an effort. The least, therefore, it would do is to protect its revenue collection. Nor is it possible to cavil at the proposed transfer of confiscated property to the members of the depressed classes. Such an arrangement should suit both parties. Non-co-operators have

[1] T. Prakasam (1876-1957); editor, *Swarajya*; was called "Andhra Kesari"—Lion of Andhra; Chief Minister of Madras

[2] Evidently a slip for "23rd"; *vide* "Letter to K. Venkatappayya", 17-1-1922, published in *The Bombay Chronicle*, 23-1-1922.

undertaken to be non-violent, to risk the loss of their all for the purpose of gaining their end and must, therefore, allow their belongings to be sold. The Government, on the other hand, must try, if it can, to break the movement of non-payment and to apply all remedies just enough to secure collection. The proposal to allow the depressed classes to bid for and purchase forfeited lands is ideal. What can be better than that the forfeited lands should be temporarily occupied by the very classes whom we want to see raised from their depressed state?

I use the adverb "temporarily", for the present occupiers must have faith in their mission to know that they must get swaraj and that under swaraj they must be restored to their original status with honour added thereto. The depressed classes, who are being used as pawns in the game by the Government, cannot be adversely affected by dispossession, for, it will be the primary care of the swaraj Government to see them well-settled, happy and contented.

So much for the necessary Government measures. The panic that has possessed them shows a guilty conscience. They do not rely upon their popularity to secure payment. They have to rely upon the bayonet and persecution to do so. They are arresting popular leaders and goading the people to violence so as to enable them to justify "bloody" measures.

And therein lies the test of the Andhras. They have hitherto proved their bravery and sacrifice. Their chosen leaders have gone to jail. Their cattle have been taken away from them and they have remained still. The worst, however, is yet to come. When the Government military [*sic*] is opened on them, they are expected to expose their willing breasts, not their unwilling backs, to the bullets and still not harbour revenge or resentment. They must let their utensils and belongings be taken away from them whilst, like Draupadi or Prahlad[1], they are praying to God and proving their faith in Him.

Non-payment is a privilege. It is meant not to enrich the resisters, but by their voluntary poverty to enrich the nation. And they can exercise the privilege only if they have purified themselves, only if they are wearing hand-spun khaddar to the exclusion of foreign cloth and, if being Hindus, they have washed themselves clean of the taint of untouchability and are prepared to treat the untouchable as a privileged brother. They must not

[1] A devotee of God persecuted by his unbelieving father, the demon-king, Hiranyakashipu. Gandhiji often spoke of him as an ideal satyagrahi.

grudgingly touch him, but they must lovingly embrace him and serve him. The touch must be a token of true penitence even as we expect the Government to be truly penitent regarding the many wrongs done to us. No niggardly acceptance of the inevitable will appear pleasing to God. It must be a thorough change of heart. We must share our schools with them, we must share our public places with them. We must nurse them in their sickness as we would nurse a brother. We must not be their patrons. We must not twist religious texts against them. We must expunge texts that are of doubtful origin and are capable of interpretation against their human rights. We must gladly give up custom that is against reason, justice and religion of the heart. We must not ignorantly and superstitiously cling to bad custom and part with it when we must, like a miser parting with his ill-gotten hoard out of pressure and expediency.

I have dwelt at length upon untouchability because I have received wires and letters warning me against accepting assurances of compliance with the Congress condition about untouchability. They tell me that the Andhras are not ready to give up untouchability. I urge the leaders to be strictly on the watch. The slightest deviation from the right path will irreparably injure our cause. God requires the purest sacrifice. Hinduism is on its trial equally with Islam and Christianity. Hindus will be false representatives of their religion of the Upanishads, which recognizes no privilege but that of merit and which accepts nothing that does not appeal to the heart and reason.

The Andhras are a virile people proud of their traditions. They are a devoutly religious people capable of sacrifice. Much is expected of them by the country and I have every hope that they will not be found wanting. They will lose nothing by waiting if they are not ready for exact fulfilment of all conditions. But they will lose all and ill-serve the country if they go to battle without full preparation.

Young India, 2-2-1922

118. SPEECH AT BARDOLI TALUKA CONFERENCE[1]

January 29, 1922

MR. PRESIDENT, BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

This is my third visit to Bardoli. The first time I came here, I merely inspected the preparations made by the brothers and sisters of this taluka. At that time, there was no responsibility on you or me. The second time[2] I came here, a great responsibility had fallen on both you and me, as the All-India Congress Committee had already passed its resolution on civil disobedience and Bardoli's preparedness was to be assessed in terms of that resolution and announced to the country. I certainly could not say that Bardoli was actually ready. I had returned after my last visit with the impression that Bardoli could get ready. I had toured the villages of the taluka, questioned people and gathered information. As a result of my inquiries, I could not say that the progress of the taluka in regard to swadeshi and untouchability was satisfactory.

If there are separate schools for the untouchables elsewhere, it may not matter, but here untouchability must positively be considered a sin. You cannot rest satisfied with having separate schools for *Antyajas*. It is your duty to persuade the *Antyajas* of those villages which have national schools to enrol their children in those schools and you should let them sit with your children. Before we pass today's resolution, such villages ought to agree to this. I have, however, learnt after coming here that they have not done so. During my last visit, I had gone to Wankaner town of this taluka; I saw at that time that the children of *Antyajas* did not attend the national schools. The workers of the place had at that time undertaken to remedy this deficiency. But, as the President said today, the *Antyaj* children in Wankaner have still not started attending the national schools. I know that this is not due to any aversion towards *Antyajas*, but only to the workers' negligence. If we want swaraj and justice in regard to the Khilafat and the Punjab, then it is not enough that we feel no aversion; we cannot show negligence either.

[1] Delivered while moving the resolution on civil disobedience

[2] *Vide* Vol. XXI, pp. 517-8.

The position about swadeshi is the same. Even in this matter, the brothers and sisters of Bardoli taluka have not done all they should have done. You are not yet in a position to produce all the khadi you require for yourselves. You still do not have as many handlooms as you require for weaving the khadi you need. All the sisters of Bardoli have not yet taken a vow to spin daily for a minimum of two or three or four hours and produce yarn which is good and can be used in weaving, and to get it woven. Certainly more spinning-wheels are plying in Bardoli taluka today than fifteen days or a month ago and it is also true that more yarn is being produced, but this is not enough. If you want to get credit for securing swaraj for the whole of India, if you wish to save the honour of Bardoli, you will have to spin in your taluka more yarn, and of finer quality, than you are doing at present.

I believe that you do feel that the Hindus, the Muslims, the Parsis and the Christians are all brothers, though I know that all taint has not yet left the minds of the Hindus and the Muslims. The smaller communities still do not have a sense of security. The fear of Hindu-Muslim friendship has not disappeared from the minds of minorities like the Parsis, the Christians and others. Swaraj necessarily means the rule of the majority. If, however, a large mass of people get more power and misuse their increased power, that will not be swaraj, that will be oppression or tyranny. If that happens, the tyrants are sure to be destroyed. What is happening in the country today is quite the opposite of this. A handful of men are tyrannizing over crores. The tyranny of the English, however, is bearable. When a handful of Englishmen tyrannize over crores of Indians, then these crores also co-operate to make that tyranny possible. If we had power in our hands, I do not think that we, too, would not oppress small and weak communities exactly as the British oppress us.

If a handful of people want to rule over crores, they can either do so through terror or by oppression, or else they may live as fakirs and control things as well as they can. But to become such fakirs requires a philanthropic instinct and selflessness. In their absence, a few can impose their rule on the many only by resorting to wickedness.

The British Empire has at the present time fallen a prey to greed and avarice. It was greed which brought it here. The East India Company was drawn here by its greed. After coming here, it saw that trade could not be carried on without political power. It saw here mines of gold and silver, namely our bodies

and the clothes thereon. To plunder that gold and silver, its Government stripped us naked. It removed our clothes by holding out temptations to us through tyranny and all manner of oppression.

They have taken possession of thousands of *bighas*[1] of land in Bengal, Champaran and Assam and raise crops[2] on them. But even there, the labour is entirely our people's. All trade is done either through intimidation or deceit. This Empire, thus, has been ruling over us by resorting to all the four methods *sama*, *dama*, *bheda* and *danda*.[3] But to blame it for this is a sign of unmanliness.

If, following in the footsteps of this Empire, 81,000 Hindus and Muslims, out of a population of 84,000 in Bardoli taluka, oppress the 3,000 Parsis, Christians and others, harass them, what will the world say about us? The world will call down curses on us as Krishna did on the tyrannical Yadavas[4], and we shall perish.

If we have acquired confidence in our own strength, we do not need arms or guns for establishing *Ramarajya*; all that is needed is awakening and knowledge.

Surely, you do not believe that the Government rules over you by the power of its guns. In a population of 85,000 there are only a few officials who represent the Government. They rule you wholly with your consent, by skilfully winning your confidence. But the moment you feel that you do not want to live in subjection to those officials, that if they want to stay on they are welcome to remain as your servants, then the 85,000 of you will win your own freedom. I have come here in the hope that you will be able to do this. To win freedom, it is necessary neither to kill a single official nor to abuse any. All that you need to do is to tell them plainly that you do not wish to co-operate with them.

Lord Willingdon once said[5] in the course of a reply to a welcome address that no one in India could say "No", that everyone knows only how to say "Yes, Sir", "Yes, my lord". Now that we

[1] A measure of land

[2] Of jute, indigo and tea

[3] Conciliation, bribery, division, and punishment

[4] Lord Krishna's kinsmen. With the advent of the *Kaliyuga*, they were possessed by the spirit of evil and, after an orgy of drinking, fought among themselves and were all killed.

[5] *Vide* Vol. XIII, p. 261.

have learnt to say "No" as advised by him and declare that we do not want to co-operate with him, he has become angry. If your connection with us is to be preserved [we tell him], let it be civilized dealing, as between friends, based on mutual respect. If instead, you want to remain as our masters, then we do not want to co-operate with you. Such co-operation is no co-operation; what you desire is our slavery.

The key to success in our fight is unity. Hindu-Muslim unity itself means protection of Parsis and Christians, and it implies the corollary that we will not harass any Government official, but maintain proper relations with every one of them, treating him as a friend. Maintaining proper relations simply means that we do not insult an official, do not hate him, do not address him slightingly but accord him the respect due to his position. We should tell him that we do not want to be enemies with him, but that we do not want his rule either. Apart from this, we may tell him, there is no quarrel between us. He cannot rule anyone in our town with a show of force. The official, too, must be convinced that he and his children can, without any fear, go into your villages any hour of the day or night and need not carry a pistol.

I have come here believing that you understand all this. If we do not sincerely practise such non-violence but are mere hypocrites, then I want to prophesy that we shall lose the game in no more than a month. If Hindu-Muslim unity is an outward show and if inwardly we harbour distrust of each other, the Muslims will think of asking for help from the Afghans, or the country may turn to Japan or may ultimately approach the British and ask them to carry on the Government. It would be far better that we die than find ourselves in such a plight. In such circumstances, the only thing for a person like me is *hijarat*, that is, leaving the country. It is not that *hijarat* is advised only in Islam. Tulsidas has said that one should run away from a place where sinners live. The wicked are also to be saluted, but from miles away. As long as we can, living in this country, chant the *mantra* of swaraj, there is dignity in our work. When, however, we find that we have no supporter left in the country, we shall have a right to leave it.

Having regard to the condition of the country, we have only one way of saving ourselves—the way of non-violence.

I explain all these matters before proposing the resolution in order that no one from among you may raise his hand in support of it without understanding it. Swaraj cannot be won by raising one's hand. The only way in which we can get it is by

sacrificing our lives, our property and possessions and bearing the loss of our household utensils and cattle.

If, till such time as all women have started spinning, the men do not take it up and they idle away their time, we are as good as dead: we are certainly ready to die, but we want to die purposefully and after purifying ourselves. For that, we should always carry a rosary in our hand, and the spinning-wheel is the only true rosary. This incantation should go on all the time in our hearts: "India is naked and I wish to clothe her." Those who spin at this time are doing God's work. If all of you men are ready to give one, two or three hours [daily] to the spinning-wheel, if you are ready to carry on with a loin-cloth in case khadi made in Bardoli taluka is not available, then only may you support this resolution.

I was told this morning, in the course of a discussion with Shri Vithalbhai and some delegates, that Bardoli was not yet ready. This shows that we are not trying to deceive God. He can never be deceived. A human being can be deceived, but we do not deceive any; and we shall not deceive ourselves either. So I decided to announce Bardoli's preparedness only after 15 days. But I thought that I should meet the representatives of all the towns before drafting the resolution, in order that those who are ready may not be disappointed. Those who said that they were not ready were volunteers engaged in active work, and their reply showed their caution. Afterwards, we met the representatives and, from among all those who were there, the representatives of 25 villages said that they were quite ready that very day. I told them that they would have to admit *Antyaj* children to their schools the very next day, that the *Gita* did not mention five *varnas*[1]. I asked them if they were ready to assimilate this fifth *varna* to one of the original four. This simply means that we should treat the *Antyajas* in the same way in which we should treat the *Dublas*[2] and others. This equality of treatment is not to be brought about by subjecting the *Antyajas* also to the same sort of ill treatment to which you perhaps subject the *Dublas* and others. Just as we permit *Dubla* children to attend our schools and enter our homes, so must we permit *Antyaj* children too; if the former can draw water from our wells, so should the *Antyajas*. What we do as a matter of duty, we should not do grudgingly; if any thing, we should adopt a liberal attitude. If there is anyone among those

1 Divisions of society; the *Gita* mentions the traditional four in Chapter IV

2 A backward community in South Gujarat

present here who thinks that he may mix with *Dheds* for the time being in order to make use of a madman like Gandhi, to him I say that he will be deceiving God, me and you all. If you have such hypocritical intentions, then rest assured that you will perish at the hands of the *Antyajas* themselves.

Do not conclude that I am a polluted person, a reformer. A rigidly orthodox Hindu, I believe that the Hindu Shastras have no place for untouchability of the type practised now. I certainly do not want to enter into a discussion about the Shastras. I am only placing before you the substance of the Shastras as I have understood them. This form of untouchability is a violation of dharma. Anyone who practises it will surely be called to account by the God of Death and he will have to suffer. Even a plea of ignorance will not save him. It is not stated anywhere in the Hindu Shastras or in the scriptures of other religions that one who sins in ignorance does not have to suffer the consequences. Only, such a person has to suffer a little less than another who sins deliberately, but suffer he must. Such is the inexorable law of karma. Do not think that, from the practical point of view, it would be wise today to mix with *Antyajas*. If you really believe that there is no dharma in doing so, then say it in so many words. That will not pain me. I will go elsewhere to beg and ask the people if they are ready to start civil disobedience on this condition. If no one comes forward, then I alone will offer civil disobedience.

It is necessary to explain clearly the condition of non-violence also. Muslims and some students of the *Gita* tell me that it is a religious duty to use the sword on some occasions. Lord Krishna himself urged Arjuna to battle. For me, however, non-violence is the highest dharma. I do not mind if you think of it as a practical necessity. But the removal of untouchability is an absolute duty. When I ask you to eradicate untouchability, I do not mean that you should eat and drink in the company of *Antyajas* or have marriage ties with them or drink water out of a jug used by one of them, without cleaning it. The Hindu religion does not compel anyone to use any article from which another has eaten. By this resolution, you bind yourselves to treat the *Antyajas* in the same way as you treat the Sudras. Raise your hands in support of this resolution only if you have understood this.

There is no doubt at all about your enthusiasm. It is because of your enthusiasm that you have been asking people to come here. But it is only when you get rid of untouchability and adopt swa-

deshi that I shall believe that you are ready to go to jail and to let your lands be auctioned, that you desire to liberate your country. Surely, anyone who sets out to free a big country like India must make correspondingly big sacrifices.

No one should believe that, since I shall be camping here, I shall save you. On the contrary, there is trouble wherever I go; the hearts of us all are in turmoil. I have not come to see that you live in peace, I have come to shake you out of it. There is no peace except through the sacrifice of peace. But the peace sacrificed is our own. When our hearts are in turmoil, when we have endured long and painfully in the fire of suffering, only then shall we get real peace.

Perhaps you believe that it will suffice if you go to jail; but jail-going by itself will not avail us. The Government will remove your crops. I am certainly going to advise you to commit legitimate theft. The Government has ten heads and twenty arms.[1] When you decline to pay land revenue, the very next day the Government's mounted troops will be on the scene. We will not, then, fight with the soldiers. Let them take our crops of cotton, grain or vegetables and anything else they can carry away with them. If, however, the Government leaves the crops standing, we will certainly remove them home. If this is regarded as theft, then let the Government punish us, even kill us. Mohanlal Pandya[2] stole onions thus on my advice and became famous as the onion-thief. But that was legitimate theft. The Government will seize your cattle. Do not abuse the man who may come to lead them away; instead, hand them over to him yourselves. Only if you behave thus will you be considered fit for withholding payment of land revenue. You will have to be ready to bear all this loss. If the Government can profit by seizing your property, it will mean that you will have to bear the loss of property worth ten lakhs rather than pay revenue of two lakhs.

Are you prepared for all this? If you are, I will propose the resolution. If anyone wants to ask a question or has not understood something, he should get his doubt resolved.

Q. We can bear it if our property is attached, but what should we do if the Government's men outrage the modesty of our wives and daughters?

A. We have lost our faith in ourselves and in mankind. Although I am in such a condition at present that even a fifteen-year-

[1] Like Ravana, in the *Ramayana*

[2] An active worker in Kheda satyagraha; *vide* Vol. XIV.

old boy can knock me down, my wife and I live together because I have the strength to protect her. I challenge any young man or even an Afghan to attempt any outrage on her. I have the strength to die and, as long as one has this strength, one need have no fear at all. You may ask what one should do if they bind one's hands and feet or point a pistol at one. The houses of many who had pistols with them have been robbed and their women have been outraged, their spick and span pistols [in working order] notwithstanding. One does not need a pistol to protect oneself, one needs only courage.[1]

1. As explained by me, do you regard promoting friendship of the Hindus, the Muslims, the Parsis and the Christians as your sacred duty?

2. Those who believe that, looking to India's present condition, only one method, that of non-violence, can bring us swaraj and secure justice in regard to the Khilafat and the Punjab, may raise their hands.

3. Those who believe that the country cannot reach her goal without adopting swadeshi and those brothers and sisters who have decided to give up the use of foreign or mill-made cloth, and have resolved that they will not use khadi made outside Bardoli taluka, may raise their hands.

4. Do you believe that the practice of untouchability is contrary to dharma? Further, are you ready to let *Antyaj* children sit with yours in national schools?

5. Without minding it if your crops, your cattle and property are seized and you are reduced to beggary, are you ready to lose your all and to go to jail—and all that without getting angry—for the sake of the country's honour?

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 2-2-1922

[1] At this point, Gandhiji waited for more questions to be asked. Then, to ascertain the representatives' preparedness, he put questions. According to the report in *Gujarati* weekly dated February 5, 1922, the audience expressed support by raising hands at the end of every question.

119. BARDOLI'S DECISION

January 30, 1922

Bardoli has come to a momentous decision. It has made its final and irrevocable choice. Vithalbhai Patel, the President, addressed a conference[1] of the representatives of the Taluka in a speech impressive for its warning. He certainly did not mince matters. There was an audience of khaddar-clad representatives numbering 4,000. There were five hundred women, a large majority of whom were also in khaddar. They were interested and interesting listeners. It was an audience of sober, responsible men and women with a stake.

I followed Vithalbhai and went through every one of the conditions of mass civil disobedience laid down by the Congress.[2] I took the sense of the meeting on every one of the conditions, separately. They understood the implications of Hindu-Muslim-Parsi-Christian unity. They realized the significance and the truth of non-violence. They saw what the removal of untouchability meant; they were prepared, not merely to take into national schools, but to induce untouchable children to join them; they have had no objection to the untouchable drawing water from the village wells. They knew that they were to nurse the untouchable sick as they would nurse their ailing neighbours. They knew that they could not exercise the privilege of non-payment of revenue and other forms of civil disobedience until they had purified themselves in the manner described by me. They knew, too, that they had to become industrious and spin their own yarn and weave their own khaddar. And lastly, they were ready to face forfeiture of their movables, their cattle and their land. They were ready to face imprisonment and even death, if necessary, and they would do all this without resentment.

There was an old dissentient voice on the question of untouchability. He said, what I said was right in theory, but it was difficult in practice to break down the custom all of a sudden. I drove the point home but the audience had made up its mind.

Before the larger meeting I had met the real workers, about fifty in number. Before that meeting Vithalbhai Patel, some work-

[1] Held on January 29, 1922

[2] *Vide* the preceding item.

ers and I conferred together and felt that we would pass a resolution postponing the decision for about a fortnight, to make the swadeshi preparation more complete and removal of untouchability more certain, by actually having untouchable children in all the sixty national schools. The brave and earnest workers of Bardoli would not listen to the postponement. They were certain that more than 50 per cent of the Hindu population were quite ready about untouchability and they were sure of being able to manufacture enough khaddar for their future wants. They were bent on trying conclusions with the Government. They bore down every objection raised by Vithalbhai Patel, and Abbas Tyabji, with his hoary beard and ever smiling face, was there to utter the warning. But they would not budge an inch from their position and so the resolution[1] which I give below was unanimously passed:

> After having fully understood and considered the conditions as essential for the starting of mass civil disobedience, this Conference of the inhabitants of the Bardoli Taluka resolves that this Taluka is fit for mass civil disobedience.
>
> This Conference is of opinion:
>
> (a) That for the redress of India's grievances, unity among Hindus, Mohammedans, Parsis, Christians and other communities of India is absolutely necessary.
>
> (b) That non-violence, patience and endurance are the only remedy for the redress of the said grievances.
>
> (c) That the use of the spinning-wheel in every home and the adoption of hand-spun and hand-woven garments to the exclusion of all other cloth by every individual are indispensable for India's freedom.
>
> (d) That swaraj is impossible without complete removal of untouchability by the Hindus.
>
> (e) That for the people's progress and for the attainment of freedom, readiness to sacrifice movable and immovable property, to suffer imprisonment and, if necessary, to lay down one's life, is indispensable.
>
> This Conference hopes that the Bardoli Taluka will have the privilege to be the first for the aforesaid sacrifices, and this Conference hereby respectfully informs the Working Committee that unless the Working Committee otherwise decides or unless the proposed Round Table Conference is held, this Taluka will immediately commence mass civil

[1] Originally framed in Gujarati

disobedience under the advice and guidance of Mr. Gandhi and the President of the Conference.

This Conference recommends that those tax-payers of the Taluka who are ready and willing to abide by the conditions laid down by the Congress for mass civil disobedience, will refrain, till further instruction, from paying land revenue and other taxes due to the Government.

Who knows the issue? Who knows whether the men and women of Bardoli will stand the repression that the Government may resort to? God only knows. In His name has the battle been undertaken. He must finish it.

The Government have acted hitherto in a most exemplary manner. They might have prohibited the Conference. They did not. They know the workers. They would have removed them long ago. They have not done so. They have not interfered with any of the activities of the people. They have permitted them to make all preparations. I have watched their conduct with wonder and admiration. Both sides have up to the time of writing behaved in a manner worthy of chivalrous warriors of old. In this battle of peace, it ought not to be otherwise. If the battle continues in this fashion, it will end only in one way. Whoever has the ear of 85,000 men and women of Bardoli will gain the day.

The Working Committee has to sit and pass its judgment upon Bardoli's decision. The Viceroy has still choice and will have yet another choice given to him. No charge of hurry, want of preparation or thought, no charge of discourtesy will it be possible to bring against the people of Bardoli.

Therefore,

Lead kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom,
Lead Thou me on;
The night is dark, and I am far from home;
Lead Thou me on.

Young India, 2-2-1922

120. TO THE PATELS OF BARDOLI

BARDOLI,
January 30, 1922

The Taluka Parishad had committed itself to a very serious and solemn duty and has taken a grave responsibility upon its shoulders. We trust that in this sacred work of regenerating the country, the *Patels*[1] of Bardoli will do their duty to the utmost. Many of them have expressed their readiness to give up their posts. We hope that from now on every *Patel* will look upon himself no longer as a *Patel* in the service of the Government but as a *Patel* in the service of the community. We, therefore, expect that their letters of resignation will be placed in our hands without delay.

We have not yet lost hope that the Government will repent of its sins and purify itself and so we do not propose to forward the letters of resignation immediately to the Government. But the moment civil disobedience is announced, we intend to forward them. Meanwhile, we should go ahead with preparations as if we had decided to start civil disobedience immediately. We expect, therefore, that every *Patel* will hand over his letter of resignation to us without delay.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI
VITHALBHAI JHAVERBHAI PATEL

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 2-2-1922

[1] Village headmen who help in the collection of Government dues from the cultivators

121. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, SURAT[1]

January 31, 1922

Dr. Choithram[2] has told you that there is a possibility of the Government arresting me in about ten days and hence you expressed a desire to meet me. But I must say that now I have no desire at all to go to jail. I would rather be killed by a bullet, or die by hanging. And I also wish that many other Gujaratis should ask for a similar death. For some time past, I have been praying to God for this very thing—that He may give me death at the hands of this Government.

I cannot hear the reports or bear the thought of the sufferings of our people in different parts of the country. Some have their belongings seized and some are flogged. The Government disperses meetings by force. How can we tolerate all this? Courting imprisonment is not the way to stop what is happening. The remedy lies in another Jallianwala Bagh and I wish that, if the Government's oppression does not stop immediately, we should have many repetitions of the Jallianwala Bagh in Gujarat.

But there should be one big difference. The people had collected in the Jallianwala Bagh for a holiday, they had no idea at all that they might be shot down. They had no such desire. Had they known that they might be shot down, perhaps no one would have even gone there. As for us, however, I wish that we should face the bullets willingly. Let some General Dyer stand before us with his troops. Let him start firing without warning us. It is my prayer to God that, if that happens, I should continue to talk to you cheerfully even at that time just as I am doing now and that you should all remain sitting calmly then, under a shower of bullets, as you are doing now. It would be a great thing for Gujarat if, at that time, your ears and backs were turned towards me but your chests and your eyes faced the direction from which the bullets came and you welcomed them. Gujarat has talked a lot, has passed enough resolutions; but, while almost the whole of the country has been suffering, we have had practically to suffer nothing. This does not mean, I know, that we have lagged behind

[1] For Gandhiji's account of the circumstances in which he delivered this speech, *vide* "My Speech at Surat", 5-2-1922.

[2] Dr. Choithram Gidwani; Congress leader from Sind; President, Sind Provincial Congress Committee; later Member of Parliament

others in doing our duty. We are not in jail because the Bombay Government will not arrest people. I hope this means that our lot is not just being imprisoned but being killed by bullets.

If we do not constantly wish that it be so, there is danger of our becoming self-conceited. We should, moreover, purify ourselves more and more every day while cherishing this desire. The mutual ill will among Hindus and Muslims must disappear. The two communities still fear and distrust each other and the Parsis and the Christians fear Hindus and Muslims. The citizens of Surat have done much, but they have a lot more to do yet. Here, too, the men and women continue to run after luxuries. The people are still disinclined to take up the spinning-wheel. They still love silk or fine cloth, foreign or mill-made cloth. Some are ready to wear a long shirt and cap of khadi, but find a dhoti of khadi too heavy to wear. Though our prejudice against the untouchables is waning, we are not yet ready to regard them as our blood-brothers. How many among us would be ready to suck out the poison if one of them was bitten by a snake? How many would offer to attend on any of them who might get fever just as we would serve our brother or sister, mother or father in such a condition?

Why should we blame the Government? If we must blame anyone, we should blame ourselves, reproach ourselves for not having improved, despite bitter experiences, and carried out the required degree of self-purification, for not having shown enough selflessness and made enough sacrifices. I often feel that we shall not be able to rid ourselves of our numerous evils and fears till we have shown in action that we can die in large numbers. As we have not suffered much till now, I pray for myself and for Gujarat that we may have to go through more suffering than what the other provinces have had to bear. Only the new Bharat that will be born as a result of that suffering will be a fit country to live in, and only with such strength can we help to heal the wounds in the hearts of our Muslim brethren. Through such suffering alone can we secure justice for the Punjab and in such strength lies swaraj.

Let the Government, therefore, arrest me if it chooses to do so. One need not at all feel unhappy if it does, need not be disturbed or lose one's head. I actually hope that, when I am arrested, the weaknesses which still remain in us will disappear, that the register of volunteers will also get filled with your names, my brothers and sisters, and all of you will start wearing hand-woven khadi made from hand-spun yarn and become absolutely fearless.

The Surat Municipality has shown great courage. The citizens should give their representatives full support. It is not enough that you have made education independent [of Government control]. There is no danger of imprisonment or such other punishment in making the entire Municipality independent. All that is required is resourcefulness, self-confidence and mutual trust. We should ourselves clean our latrines and roads. We should ourselves look after the needs of the poor among us and attend on the sick; we should collect necessary funds for these purposes and see that they are properly managed.

In all this, where is the need for Government's help or for its laws? Unfortunately, we had no confidence in ourselves. The *mahajans* had become dishonest. The people, too, had become obdurate. This was to the advantage of the Government. If the citizens of Surat voluntarily pay to the *mahajan* such taxes as they themselves fix, and if the latter spends the money on the activities I have mentioned and maintains full and clear accounts, you will have in the *mahajan* an independent municipality. Today's municipality is but a caricature of the *mahajan*. To have the Government's municipality is to exchange dependence for independence.

I hope that the citizens of Surat will stand firm in their decision, that they will do much more than what they have done and thereby bring glory to their city, to Gujarat and to India.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 5-2-1922

122. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR[1]

Tuesday Night [January 31, 1922][2]

DEAR MR. JAYAKAR,

You will see my letter[3] to the Viceroy. It is being posted to him tomorrow. I am going to delay publication till the 4th. That meets your requirement also. I do not think I could do more.

1 Sent in reply to a letter dated January 30, 1922 from Jayakar and Natarajan, Secretaries of the Leaders' Conference which had met at Bombay on January 14 and 15. In this letter they had enclosed copies of their correspondence with the Viceroy who had turned down their proposals as a basis for a round table conference, and had asked Gandhiji to postpone his programme in Bardoli pending further communication in about three days' time.

2 From Jayakar's *The Story of My Life*, Vol. I, p. 554

3 *Vide* "Letter to Viceroy", 1-2-1922.

I hope you will find the letter to be unexceptionable. It gives the Viceroy more than he could possibly require. He need not call a round table conference. The more I think of it, the more clear it is to me that he cannot call the conference but he can easily adopt my suggestion, if he wishes so.

I am sending a copy to Malaviyaji.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Hindu, 10-2-1922

123. LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM

[Before *February 1, 1922*][1]

MY DEAR SUNDARAM,

My heart goes out to you. I do not want to hurt you with a harsh word or a kind word harshly uttered. I want your week of silence to be a week of privilege. Do not think of helping Ba during the week. But use the wheel. It is a real companion. Study Hindi and think deep. Write what you like. Do not read much just now.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3201

124. LETTER TO VICEROY[2]

[BARDOLI,
February 1, 1922][3]

TO
HIS EXCELLENCY THE VICEROY
DELHI

SIR,

Bardoli is a small tahsil in the Surat District in the Bombay Presidency, having a population of about 87,000 all told.

[1] The silence mentioned in the text was presumably the first occasion when the addressee undertook to observe silence for a week which expired on or before February 1, 1922, for, on February 1 his second silence had begun; *vide* "Letter to V. A. Sundaram", 1-2-1922.

[2] This was published in the newspapers on February 4, 1922. For the Government's reply *vide* Appendix II.

[3] From *India in 1921-22*

On the 29th ultimo it decided under the presidency of Mr. Vithalbhai Patel to embark on mass civil disobedience, having proved its fitness for it in terms of the resolution[1] of the All-India Congress Committee which met at Delhi during the first week of November last. But as I am perhaps chiefly responsible for Bardoli's decision, I owe it to your Excellency and the public to explain the situation under which the decision has been taken.

It was intended under the resolution of the All-India Congress Committee, before referred to, to make Bardoli the first unit for mass civil disobedience in order to mark the national revolt against the Government for its consistently criminal refusal to appreciate India's resolve regarding the Khilafat, the Punjab and swaraj.

Then followed the unfortunate and regrettable rioting on the 17th November last in Bombay, resulting in the postponement of the step contemplated by Bardoli.

Meanwhile repression of a virulent type has taken place with the concurrence of the Government of India in Bengal, Assam, the United Provinces, the Punjab, the Province of Delhi and, in a way, in Bihar and Orissa and elsewhere. I know that you have objected to the use of the word "repression" for describing the action of the authorities in these provinces. In my opinion when action is taken which is in excess of the requirements of a situation, it is undoubtedly repression. The looting of property, assaults on innocent people, the brutal treatment of prisoners in the jails including flogging can in no sense be described as legal, civilized or in any way necessary. This official lawlessness cannot be described by any other term but lawless repression. Intimidation by non-co-operators or their sympathizers to a certain extent in connection with hartals and picketing may be admitted but in no case can it be held to justify the wholesale suppression of peaceful volunteering or equally peaceful public meetings under a distorted use of an extraordinary law which was passed in order to deal with activities which were manifestly violent both in intention and action, nor is it possible to designate as otherwise than repression, action taken against innocent people under what has appeared to many of us an illegal use of the ordinary law, nor again can the administrative interference with the liberty of the Press under a law that is under promise of repeal be regarded as anything but repression.

The immediate task before the country, therefore, is to rescue from paralysis freedom of speech, freedom of association and free-

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXI, pp. 411-4.

dom of the Press. In the present mood of the Government of India and in the present unprepared state of the country in respect of complete control of the forces of violence, non-co-operators were unwilling to have anything to do with the Malaviya Conference whose object was to induce Your Excellency to convene a round table conference. But as I was anxious to avoid all avoidable suffering, I had no hesitation in advising the Working Committee of the Congress to accept the recommendations of that Conference.[1] Although in my opinion the terms were quite in keeping with your own requirements as I understood them through your Calcutta speech and otherwise, you have summarily rejected the proposal.

In the circumstances, there is nothing before the country but to adopt some non-violent method for the enforcement of its demands including the elementary rights of free speech, free association and free Press. In my humble opinion the recent events are a clear departure from the civilized policy laid own by Your Excellency at the time of the generous, manly and unconditional apology[2] of the Ali Brothers, viz., that the Government of India should not interfere with the activities of non-co-operation so long as they remained non-violent in word and deed. Had the Government's policy remained neutral and allowed public opinion to ripen and have its full effect, it would have been possible to advise postponement of the adoption of civil disobedience of an aggressive type till the Congress had acquired fuller control over the forces of violence in the country and enforced greater discipline among the millions of its adherents. But this lawless repression (in a way unparalleled in the history of this unfortunate country) has made the immediate adoption of mass civil disobedience an imperative duty. The Working Committee of the Congress has restricted it to only certain areas to be selected by me from time to time, and at present it is confined only to Bardoli. I may, under said authority, give my consent at once in respect of a group of 100 villages in Guntur in the Madras Presidency, provided they can strictly conform to the conditions of non-violence, unity among different classes, the adoption and manufacture of hand-spun khadi and untouchability.

But before the people of Bardoli actually commence mass civil disobedience, I would respectfully urge you as the head of the Government of India, finally to revise your policy and set free all the non-co-operating prisoners who are convicted or under trial

[1] *Vide* "Working Committee's Resolution", 17-1-1922.

[2] *Vide* Vol. XX, pp. 93-4.

for non-violent activities and to declare in clear terms a policy of absolute non-interference with all non-violent activities in the country whether they be regarding the redress of the Khilafat or the Punjab wrongs or swaraj or any other purpose and even though they fall under the repressive sections of the Penal Code or the Criminal Procedure Code or other repressive laws subject always to the condition of non-violence. I would further urge you to free the Press from all administrative control and to restore all the fines and forfeitures recently imposed. In thus urging I am asking Your Excellency to do what is being done today in every country which is deemed to be under civilized Government. If you can see your way to make the necessary declaration within seven days of the date of publication of this manifesto, I shall be prepared to advise postponement of civil disobedience of an aggressive character, till the imprisoned workers have, after their discharge, reviewed the whole situation and considered the position *de novo*. If the Government makes the requested declaration I shall regard it as an honest desire on its part to give effect to public opinion and shall therefore have no hesitation in advising the country to be engaged in further moulding public opinion without violent restraint from either side and trust to its working to secure the fulfilment of its unalterable demands. Aggressive civil disobedience in that case will be taken up only when the Government departs from its policy of strictest neutrality or refuses to yield to clearly expressed opinion of the vast majority of the people of India.

I remain,
Your Excellency's faithful
servant and friend,
M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 9-2-1922

125. LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM

BARDOLI,
February 1 [1922][1]

MY DEAR SUNDARAM,

I am glad the silence has agreed with you and that you are again silent.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3190

[1] *Vide* letters to V. A. Sundaram dated Before February 1, 1922, and 3-2-1922.

126. NOTES

FROM THE BIG BROTHER

The reader will appreciate the following letter[1] from Maulana Shaukat Ali to his son:

I do not think that I need add anything to the letter by way of supplementary instructions. Besides laying down the instructions, it serves another useful purpose. It sets at rest all doubts as to the Brothers' attitude. I know that they are not implacable. They are most reasonable but, thank God, they are also firm. They will yield not an inch out of *their* weakness. They will yield everything to reason. Being godfearing they are capable of entering into their opponents' real difficulties. Given perfect sincerity in the opponent and readiness to do the right and acknowledge the wrong, no opponent need fear or distrust them. But to think of placating Mussulmans without placating the Brothers is to attempt to ignore Islam in India.

[1] Not reproduced here. Writing from jail in Karachi, Shaukat Ali had described conditions in jail, declared his determination to resist the humiliating ones and had suggested the following instructions for workers going to jail: " . . . I would suggest that all workers be told beforehand about the following:

1. They must be courteous to all, especially to their fellow prisoners and Indian warders who are weak and helpless and made to do dirty work. We must lift them up and give them real courage and teach them patriotism and discipline. Along with this we must have full confidence in ourselves and in our capacity for suffering.

2. We must ask for clean food, clothing and bedding. But this is the least important thing in my opinion. The more important things come later.

3. We must do as much work as we can easily accomplish without detriment to our health. If forced to do more than our strength or circumstances permit, we can really retaliate by refusing to work, the only weapon in our hands . . . *We must teach this Government, both outside the jail and inside of it, that it cannot coerce or force us to do things against our wishes*. . . . There are some very humiliating practices which we *must* refuse to perform:

(a) Every evening all clothes are taken off and only in a little slip we show that we have not concealed anything in our groins.

(b) Jail parade, where you are made to do things which kill self-respect and, in the name of discipline, humiliate you.

(c) Paying the call of nature with many people round about you and a warder watching you, and so forth.

(d) *Azan* must be openly said by each 5 times daily at prayer time [Whether or no the jail a uthorities objects to this] . . ."

Frightfulness in Meerut

Kazi Bashiruddin Ahmed, Secretary, District Khilafat Committee writes:[1]

It is not without deep grief that I reproduce this letter and the one that follows. I feel humiliated and ashamed to find that human nature can stoop so low. I have no reason to doubt the accuracy of the statements of my correspondents.

My advice to all these brave co-workers is: "Abide by your pledge of non-violence; forgive the persecutors; they are evidently mad; they do not know what they are doing; never mind the abusive language; it fouls the utterer, not the unwilling listener; the assaults do injure our bodies, but they can only do us good if we can only bear them manfully and without resentment." For me this exhibition of unmanly lawlessness on the part of the police is one more proof of the corrupt nature of the system. Barbarism has been cultivated and human nature deliberately degraded for the sake of sustaining power, usurped in the commercial interest of a minority intent upon exploiting and draining this poor country which I fondly believe was once rich in men and material.

Inhumanity in Banaras

Here is the substance of a telegram that was to be sent from Banaras but which was returned by the telegraph office as objectionable:

> Authorities beating and sending people naked home in cold midnight; foul abuse and obscene jokes with boy volunteers. Patriots should afford relief in this direction before talking of conference or compromise.

The reader will note the stinging rebuke to the "patriots" for thinking of conferences and compromises whilst such inhumanities are being perpetrated. The facts briefly set forth in the telegram are supplemented with details in a covering letter, but I am not free as yet to give them. Professor Kripalani, who is the instigator of the wire, is himself in his jail taking measures that may result in the cessation of the degrading inhumanities described in the telegram.

For those who are outside jails the course is clear. Irritation and excitement will do us no good. We must recognize the gravity of the problem. The greater the dirt, the greater the need for self-purification and self-sacrifice. We can gain nothing by vilifying the police. They are creatures of circumstances. Their train-

[1] His letter, not reproduced here, described civil disobedience activities in Meerut and the barbaric behaviour of the police.

ing has not improved the nature they brought with them, probably it has been made worse.

It is for the first time they are handling their cultured countrymen with a high purpose. We must not expect a sudden change in the police. Patience and gentleness will convert them into decent men with fellow-feeling. For me swaraj commenced when the best of us found themselves inside prison walls. Ever since it has been a steady accession of strength and a steady reformation. The latter is not to begin after a settlement but it will be the result of real and ever growing reformation. Shall we not blame ourselves, too, for the police brutality? Have we not too long neglected them, too long feared them, thought ill of them and considered them to be past redemption? If we were to retain the same attitude of mind, we shall find so many groups to be beyond hope, that we shall have only ourselves left as paragons of perfection and patterns of virtue. In other words, there would be no swaraj at the end of such exclusive assumption of virtue. Let us, therefore, take a portion of the blame ourselves for the vices of the police and the weakness of our general surroundings. But our patience will be justified only if we exchange for love of ease and comfort, love of pain and suffering. In spite of the gruesome news served out to us from day to day, we can afford to be happy if we have done our little best in the cause. We must after all leave the result in the hands of God.

Punjab Offering

The impartial Punjab Government have given the opportunity to Jullundur, which seemed to be left out, of covering itself with honour. They have arrested its leading worker Lala Hans Raj, a barrister belonging to an old noble family which has rendered many a service to the Government. Lala Hans Raj's offence consists in his having dared like Lala Duni Chand of Ambala personally to picket the liquor licence auction. One would have thought it to be a merit for a barrister to exchange his brief for moral reform. But in India Government look at things differently. Lala Hans Raj will ,however, be none the worse for his jail experiences. His grateful countrymen will put a higher valuation upon his services as a national prisoner than as a successful barrister.

Lala Duni Chand left with his son a letter to be sent to me from which I copy the following:[1]

[1] The excerpt, not reproduced here, contained news of Duni Chand's arrest for picketing an auction sale of liquor contracts in Court premises and of arrests of other volunteers for picketing liquor shops.

Mrs. Duni Chand sends a small letter saying how glad she was to part with her husband, weak in body though he was, for she knew that he was serving the people.

INTERFERENCE WITH RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

It has fallen to the lot of Pandit Arjunlal Sethi to suffer religious persecution in jails. When he underwent a long term of imprisonment in Jeypore he had to hunger-strike for being disallowed to perform religious ceremonies. He is now serving in Sagor Jail. His son who is in Ajmer says:

> Inhuman treatment is reported to be meted out to my father. He has been suffering from bad pneumonia. In spite of his illness, he was made to grind. It was when he was thus pressed that he had tendered an apology which he withdrew immediately he came to his senses. Nowadays he is being forced to take eggs and wine. He has lost in weight.

I do not know how far this news is true. The son has not been able to see his father. If the information received by him is correct it is a case of pure torture. Anybody can see that he is too frail to be given the task of grinding. To force a patient to take brandy or eggs is a crime against religion. I know a young civil resister in South Africa, Revashanker Sodha, had eggs forced down his throat. He bore down his persecutors by simply vomiting out the liquid as soon as it was forced down. The authorities had not the heart to repeat the cruelty in the face of such fixed determination. Needless to say the brave lad recovered in spite of his refusal to take eggs and is today hale and hearty. Opinions may differ as to the wisdom of rejecting foods prescribed by doctors. But here we are not concerned with the medical aspect. I hold that a man has a perfect right to refuse to be cured at the cost of what he believes to be his religious conviction specially when he is under duress.

"MOTHERLAND" AT BAY

Maulvi Mazharul Haq's[1] *Motherland* has been called upon to lodge security. It has proved too independent for the Bihar authorities. It has mercilessly exposed their delinquencies. It has dared to think aloud. Frankness must be muzzled. The editor has proudly declined to lodge security and has declared his intention of bringing out his paper as a handwritten sheet. He should command the services of a number of volunteers to make copies of his

[1] 1866-1930; Nationalist leader of Bihar; one of the founders and, later, president of the Muslim League; supported Gandhiji during Champaran satyagraha and the non-co-operation movement.

thoughts from day to day. Compression of news and thoughts will perhaps be better valued by the reader, if only for the special effort it will cost so many workers to copy. The value of an elegantly written copy of the *Gita* is any day greater than of the printed copies. I notice in the *Chronicle* that the *Bande Mataram* security of Rs. 2,000 has been forfeited. I presume, it too will have to join the ever increasing army of handwritten newspapers. It is merely a question of time when every non-co-operating newspaper will be suppressed. The printing can be suppressed but the suppression of writing is difficult. But I observe that the Orissa authorities served notice on leaders not to write notices about recruiting volunteers, etc. To suppress the written word, the Government will have to imprison the bodies of offending writers. Then will the thought be entirely free. And the silent word of a true and tested man is more potent than the written or the printed word of one whom the people do not know or recognize as their own. Let no non-co-operator with the wonderful lesson of the past three months of repression and the consequent awakening, for a single minute feel disturbed by the suppression of newspapers conducted in the interest of non-co-operation.

More Written Newspapers

Swaraj of Allahabad which had its security forfeited has come out as a written newspaper. It is edited by Babu Ramkrishna Laghate. It is elegantly written. The art of calligraphy is going out of fashion by reason of the introduction of printing and typewriting. The issuing of written newspapers, if it has to be continued long enough, is bound to result in the revival of the beautiful art. Some of the old manuscripts are "things of beauty and joy for ever". Gauhati, too, has come out with a written newspaper. It is written both in Hindi and Assamese and is issued bi-weekly. The price is three half *paisas*. Of all the three written newspapers the Gauhati copy is the clearest for reading. It is called the *Congress*. In point of calligraphy *Swaraj* is the best. The *Independent* print is indistinct. Either the Roneo or the tracing on the Cyclo must be bad. All the three papers will have to train a special staff of volunteers or paid workers so as to be able to issue copies that can be deciphered as easily as the printed sheet. And they will have to cultivate the art of compressed expression. I feel sure that, compactly written as all the three newspapers are, there is room for further compression without making the thought obscure. The object must be to give the reader what he cannot get elsewhere in the shape of thought or facts. The managers must see every copy

and destroy all unreadable faint impressions even as a printer does. I remind the conductors of these admirable papers that the *Satyagrahi*[1] which had a short-lived career consisted only of one side of a foolscap sheet.

DEFERRED PAY

The Government have found no difficulty in stopping the deferred pay, as pensions are nowadays called, of Mr. Vinayakrao Joshi of Dharwar for no other reason than that he has tried to serve his country, whereas Sir Michael O'Dwyer who never loses an opportunity of vilifying educated Indians and of insolently patronizing the masses as if they were little children always needing the attention and care of an elder, and General Dyer, who still believes that he performed a simple duty when he massacred the innocent men in Jallianwala Bagh, continue to draw pensions. We are told that there are legal difficulties in stopping their pensions and that if the legal obstacle can be surmounted, it would be immoral to take away their pensions. Verily there is one law for an Indian, another for an Englishman; one law for a patriot, another for a persecutor. What is moral in the case of one is immoral in the case of the other! I congratulate Mr. Joshi on his spirited reply to the Government and on his patriotic courage in forgoing his pension when it became a matter of choice between service of his country and retention of his pension. Mr. Joshi's sacrifice strengthens India's cause. His material loss is Indians' moral gain.

POLITICAL AGENCIES

Repression is slowly spreading its net in all directions, and nowadays precedes the Prince's visit as if to prove to the people the might His Royal Highness represents. As he is expected in Indore, Babus Badrilal Aryadutta and Chhotelal have been deported from Indore Camp by the Agent to the Governor-General. Orders have also been issued prohibiting public meetings within the Residency area. It may be that public life is not so well organized in these Residencies as in British India proper. But if it is, I have no doubt about the duty of the residents of the Camp. If they can retain the non-violent spirit and if they are at all well organized, they should hold meetings notwithstanding the orders, and risk deportation or imprisonment. In my opinion those who are deported should return to be arrested.

[1] Gandhiji's unregistered newsweekly first issued on April 7, 1919, in defiance of the Press Act during the agitation against the Rowlatt legislation. Its publication was stopped when Gandhiji suspended civil disobedience; *vide* Vol. XV.

A similar story comes from Kathiawar. It seems that the Princes of Kathiawar have arranged shikar parties and other non-political but expensive amusements for H.E. the Governor. The subjects of the States are angry, not over the Governor's visit, but over the expensive amusements arranged in his honour. Probably the Governor does not even appreciate them. Why should these functionaries always want amusements? It is not as if they are without any whilst they are working at headquarters. Indeed these amusements themselves must become a task for at least some of them. Neither party can be natural at these shows. They must put on their best behaviour and observe their respective distances. They must always act both officially and correctly even when they are meeting unofficially. In the circumstances, it would certainly save a great deal of time and expense if these amusements were cut down and the visits limited to State business only. Moreover, the shikar parties offend vegetarian Kathiawar. The people of Kathiawar cannot but resent, even when they say nothing, the waste of animal life for no purpose whatsoever. I am told that in order to draw the beasts of prey, goats have to be sacrificed for days in advance. Such shikar, over which so much innocent blood is spilt and is without any risk of life or limb on the part of the shikari, is robbed of all charm and becomes a mild copy of the law that prevails between the Government and the people in India, whereby the public are always the sport of the Government which never runs any risk. It is not the Mosaic law of tooth for tooth but it is the law of bullets against brickbats, life for a scratch. When the hunter runs no risk, it is not good sport but is downright cruelty. But the Agent to the Governor in Kathiawar evidently could not tolerate protest meetings even against the extravagance of the Princes and has therefore, it appears, prohibited public meetings and arrested Messrs Manilal Kothari and Mansukhlal Ravjibhai Mehta.

All this activity in the Agencies is a new development. I congratulate those who are arrested. The law of non-violence is just as imperative in the Agencies and the States as it is in the pure British area. What is more, the residents in the States must not embarrass the latter in respect of or in the interest of the movement of non-co-operation with the Government. They may fight against their local grievances but even then not in the intensive non-co-operation manner except under very grave circumstances and except when public opinion is with them. In the States the subjects cannot claim to have exhausted all their resources with the Princes themselves. They must form public opinion, carry on

agitation and otherwise organize themselves. I often hear the talk that the Congress became useful only when non-co-operation came in. This is an utterly wrong view of the situation. The Congress agitation paved the way for non-co-operation. The latter was the fitting corollary to the previous Congress activities. The Congress has always been in India the greatest demonstrative and effective agency for ventilating people's grievances. It has always been a true register of popular strength and weakness. The States subjects, too, must have their Congresses and Conferences quite apart from the British Indian prototype and probably differently managed. They may learn from the mistakes of the parent body but they have to go through that preliminary discipline. A mere unexaggerated exposure of a wrong is by no means a small matter. Wrong like vice flourishes in secrecy. It dies of sunlight. Therefore let the subjects of the States organize themselves quickly and in a methodical manner without mixing up and spoiling their local matters with the National Congress. The State subjects can work as so many are doing in the Congress and for the Congress outside the States area.

A Warning Voice from Bengal

There is a friend, an old and tried servant of the nation, who never fails to inform me of threatening clouds that appear time and again on the horizon in Bengal. This time he warns me against countenancing a general non-payment movement. He thinks that precipitate action is quite likely in Bengal as most of the leaders are in jail. I cannot complain but I cannot help noting that the imprisonment of leaders is due to the criminal folly of the Government which has treated the real peace-makers as if they were peace-breakers. The Government are inviting violence. They are, as if of a set purpose, preparing the country for violence. But here again I must not complain. I admit that most of us had expected all this and more, and yet we came to the conclusion that we had to take our courage in both our hands and move forward without faltering. Our trust then was, as it today is, in God.

But I know that we must take every possible precaution to avert every unexpected crisis. I have therefore strongly advised and advise again that wisdom requires that all parts of India should wait for the experiment which I have undertaken personally to supervise. Bengal has done much. She has worked wonders, she has suffered much, is still suffering and is still keeping herself under great restraint. I would appeal to all the Bengal leaders to rest on their oars and not to take a single new step. Let them by all

means assert the right of free speech and free association. But there is no occasion for embarking on mass civil disobedience, or non-payment, which is one phase of it. The workers will have taken the masses through a richer discipline by advising them to pay the rents due for the current period.

What about Andhra?

"Then why have you advised Andhra in favour of non-payment? Have you not committed a breach of your own compact with the Malaviya Conference not to start mass civil disobedience up to 31st instant?" asks another friend. (*These notes are being written on the 30th*). Well, I have not advised the Andhras to start mass civil disobedience. I could not prevent them from preparing for it. Their suspension was merely to a period inside the due date for the purpose of feeling their way. The Government have certainly precipitated matters. But the Andhra people are shrewd and I hope they know the art of humility. In spite of the Government provocation, I have every hope that they all will be humble enough not to undertake mass civil disobedience unless they find that they are absolutely ready, and are sure of being able to fulfil all the conditions laid down by the Congress, non-violence being by no means the least of them. I would certainly be better pleased if no other part of India, not excluding Andhra, was to try the experiment till the result of mine was definitely known.

Danger of Mass Movement

Whilst there is every reason for self-gratification over mass awakening, it would be foolish to ignore its undoubted dangers. I have just read a notice in the papers that a girl has been pretending to be my daughter and receiving on that account all kinds of attention. I do not mind owning, I should be proud to own, thousands of good, restrained girls as my daughters. They will do credit to me and the country. The world would recognize them as members of an ever increasing family by adoption. As it is, I have to remark for the tenth time that I do not possess the good fortune to have a daughter. There is a tiny "untouchable" girl whom I do proudly call my adopted daughter. She has brought happiness to me and I hope by the time she has grown up she will bring truth and humility to her future field of service. Today she is a veritable "devil". She believes in all play and no work. She finds it hard to work without the ebony ruler which used to keep her straight in her parental home. But I do not mind this charming idler of seven years claiming me as father. There are also some grown up girls who permit me the pleasure of claiming

them as my daughters, but then they make it difficult for me to live up to the standard they exact from me. They are ever in danger of my being a discreditable father to them. But I must inform all the girls of India that I decline to run the risk of being discredited by their forcible adoption. I want certainly to adopt all the exacting girls like the ones whose names, too, I dare not give to the world.

But the reported forcible adoption of me by a girl is a comparatively harmless pastime. I hear that a gentleman by name Motilal Puncholi hailing from Udaipur claims to be my disciple and to preach temperance and what not among the rustics of the Rajputana States. He is reported to be surrounded by an armed crowd of admirers and establishing his kingdom or some otherdom wherever he goes. He claims, too, miraculous power. He or his admirers are reported also to have done some destructive work. I wish that people will once for all understand that I have no disciples. I have for the time being at any rate no existence apart from the Congress and the Khilafat committees. All my activity is referable to these two organizations. None works in my name; none has authority to use my name save under my own writing. No one has any writing from me to do any work save the Congress or the Khilafat work. And nobody has any authority from me to use any arms, even sticks, against any person.

I understand that these brave but simple rustics have been induced to refuse payment of taxes due to the State to which they belong. They are even told that I have asked the tax-payers belonging to the Sirohi State not to pay more than Rs. 1¼ each. Now I know nothing of all this. No one has consulted me about the matter. Pandit Ramakant Malaviya, Chief Minister of the State, has kindly brought the matter to my notice and he tells me that great mischief is being done in my name. If my writing reaches these countrymen at all, I would like to tell them that they should lay all their grievances before the State authorities and never resort to arms. If they wish to withhold payment of tax which they consider excessive, it is their right. But it is a right never to be exercised lightly. They must cultivate public opinion and let their case see the light of day. If they do not take these precautions they will find everything and everybody arrayed against them and they will find themselves heavy losers in the end.

Young India, 2-2-1922

127. DR. RAY ON CHARKHA

It gives me real pleasure to publish in full the following translation[1] of a closely reasoned preface of Sir P. C. Ray to a Bengali booklet on charkha. Valuable as his wonderful chemical researches and organization of industries have been, I have no doubt that his organization of the home spinning will be more valuable and wonderful still. The chemical researches have brought renown to India, the industries with which he has identified himself have brought Bengal a few lacs of rupees and provided work for talented Bengalis, but the introduction of home spinning means banishment of starvation or semi-starvation and degradation from millions of Bengali homes, of famines and consequent diseases and the introduction in these homes of the sunshine of smile which a contented stomach brings. I entirely endorse Dr. Ray's remarks that Bengal gained nothing during the first swadeshi agitation by bringing cloth from Bombay or Ahmedabad instead of Manchester or Japan. In order to enable us to feel the full and immediate effect of swadeshi, we must manufacture yarn and cloth in our millions of scattered homes. Swadeshi will bind them as nothing else can.

Young India, 2-2-1922

128. INDIANS ABROAD

To
THE EDITOR, *Young India*

SIR,

. . . our countrymen in Kenya have to face a great agitation by the European Colonists, while the condition of our helpless brethren in Fiji is growing worse everyday. The troubles and difficulties of these people are too numerous to be related here.

At this time . . . it cannot be expected that the Indian public will be able to devote a great deal of attention to the problems of Indians abroad, still it is our duty to do something for these unfortunate countrymen of ours in the Colonies. . . .

[1] Not reproduced here

. . . We have decided to do propaganda work for the Colonial Indians in an organized way. We shall be thankful if our countrymen in the Colonies will send to us regularly accounts of their difficulties, which will be circulated here through the English and vernacular papers. Any suggestions for the proper organization of this work will oblige us.

We are, etc.,

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
SABARMATI

TOTARAM SANADHYA[1]
BANARASIDAS CHATURVEDI

I hope that these earnest workers will get all the assistance they are asking for. I feel humiliated to think that in spite of expert knowledge of the condition of our countrymen beyond the seas, I am doing nothing specially for them. I take comfort in the thought that there are two specialists, besides Charlie Andrews, who are interesting themselves in the matter. For me, the swaraj work includes the service of the pariahs of the Empire.

Young India, 2-2-1922

129. *A CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY'S GENERALIZATIONS*

To
MR. M. K. GANDHI

SIR,

Until a few days ago I had no personal experience of the results of your propaganda in India. But on 13th January, the day of the arrival of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales in Madras, whilst I was driving through the streets of Georgetown, I was set on by a band of rowdies shouting "*Gandhiji ki jai*", pelted with bricks and tiles, had dry earth poured over me and was forbidden to proceed on my journey. Also one of the lamps of my carriage was lifted out of its socket and carried off. . . . What I suffered was also the fate of many others, only some suffered much more seriously. I am fortunate to have escaped without bodily injury. . . .

My experience has enlightened me as to some things. I would like to communicate them to you.

You profess to be working for the good of India. So many others profess, Christian missionaries for instance, of whom I am one, so also the British Government. Both of these can point to a past with an immense accomplishment of benefits achieved for this country and its people. . . .

I would like to ask you, what have you accomplished of definite improvement in the country and positively good result?. . . Hitherto, you

[1] He had spent many years in Fiji and written a book describing his stay there. Later, he joined Gandhiji's Ashram at Sabarmati.

have been the rouser up of troubles. For those in the Punjab, it was you who were the font and origin, and no one else. Also you have put ideas into the minds of Mohammedans of Khilafat wrongs. As regards the Khilafat, whether to wrong or to right, neither India, its people, nor Government have anything whatever to do, nor desire any. It is a matter entirely outside India. You profess to promote swaraj, yet have offered no constructive ideas of what that is to be, except the puerile and impracticable ones of khaddar and charkha, mere childish notions of what is to benefit the whole of a great nation. How do you intend to carry out swaraj? Are you in any way at all preparing yourself or anyone else for its responsibilities? What are you actually inaugurating of deeds of practical arrangements? You talk of something that is to eventuate in some vague way. All are sounding words, undefined and indefinite.

Have you studied history and noted the progress of nations? Have you at all noted that progress is made by growth and gradual development; and not by revolution and destruction? Do you ever notice how God works through nature, that the life of plants and animals grows by slow advance, by evolution not revolution. Do you ever watch the sky and the movement of the stars? Those that can be seen to move rapidly are falling and in process of destruction and ruin. The suns and systems which continue through the ages can scarcely be seen to move at all. Have you waited for the dawn of morning to come in? Does it roll up like the shutter of a shop? To ascend a mountain the climber has to take slow and painful steps one after another. To descend quickly he needs only step over the precipice and he is at the bottom in a few seconds. Think, Mr. Gandhi, think.

I believe you wish the good of India, as many others do, but your present methods are on the wrong road. For India to be fit for swaraj it must grow into it, not be manufactured. The process of growth has been going on. The British Government and people were helping it to grow and will continue the good work, and will rejoice when at last all the burden and responsibility is off their shoulders. But,—it is a big alternative,—the results of your method of attempting to attain swaraj, even so far as only already evident, ought to show you that you have adopted the wrong course. The disorders which you have stirred up in the Punjab, Bombay, Malabar and elsewhere, the riotings, robberies, cruelties, arson, murders, all these should open your eyes to the fearfully mistaken method you have chosen. Why are you still so blind? You are stirring up evil forces which you cannot control, and rejecting to unite with good forces, which can control and can make for forward movement. While claiming independence you are only too clearly showing that you are incapable of using it. Turn again, O Mahatma! turn again, if you are really a great soul. Enter the strait and narrow path of self-renuncia-

tion and stern discipline and co-operative enterprise. Cease mere shouting and waving of flags. Do something positively good yourself, and not be merely a mouth to find fault with the good that others, imperfectly it is true, but with earnest and unselfish purpose, are at least attempting to do.

Yours sincerely,
G. H. MACFARLANE

MADRAS,
25th January, 1922

This letter[1] is a set-off to the two letters from two English ladies recently published in these columns.[2] They are also Christian missionaries. It is clear that Mr. Macfarlane has not followed or studied the movement. A missionary of all people should know that it is most dangerous to generalize from particular instances. No doubt it was cowardly on the part of the Madras mob to have assaulted Mr. Macfarlane and robbed him of his lantern. Every sensible man has condemned the madness. Every sensible man admits that it has harmed the cause, for the reason that violence has been done out of false sympathy for non-co-operation whose basis is non-violence.

But are the things that have happened in Bombay and Madras, new experiences in the world's history? Have they not frequently happened in Europe? Have they not repeatedly happened in England and Scotland? Do not enraged mobs express themselves precisely as the Madras and the Bombay mobs have? Have not the Irish done much worse things than the Bombay and the Madras mobs? And have they not got what almost amounts to swaraj because of their hooliganism?

I detest the hooliganism of Bombay and Madras, but from a different standpoint. I detest also the Irish hooliganism. There is, however, a difference between the Irish hooliganism and the Bombay and the Madras copy. The Irish was practical and honest. It was practical because it was not out of tune with the Irish atmosphere. It was honest, because the Irishmen made no secret of their doctrine. The Indian hooliganism is both unpractical and dishonest; unpractical, because so far as I know the Indian mind, hooliganism cannot flourish in India. The Indian mind is not attuned to it. It is dishonest, because the Indian movement professes to be absolutely, though expediently, non-violent. Non-co-operators must not handle what they cannot keep non-violent.

1 Only excerpts reproduced here

2 *Vide* "Notes", 12-1-1922, under the sub-title "In God's Hands" and "Notes", 26-1-1922, under the sub-title "An English Lady Blesses".

But Mr. Macfarlane is so horrified at the hooliganism of Madras that he considers India to be unfit for swaraj. On the contrary I hold that even hooliganism may be a better state than the existing unnatural and dishonest condition. It has got to be ended at any cost. Only, the present leaders cannot handle a violent movement. The majority of them have neither the desire nor the qualifications for it. They are making a Herculean effort to keep it non-violent.

Mr. Macfarlane claims that India has immensely benefited under the existing system of Government. In my opinion the sum total of its activity has been moral, material, and political injury to India. The moral standard is lower today than it used to be. The immorality of the present age is refined and therefore illusive and more dangerous. Materially, there is deeper pauperism today than before. Politically, India is so emasculated that her people scarcely know their degradation.

The writer asks to know the accomplishments of the movement. It has brought about a tremendous awakening among the people. Whereas they had given up hand-spinning entirely, today thousands of homes are spinning hundreds of thousands of yards of yarn. Whereas hand-spun garments had gone out of use, today thousands of men and women are wearing khaddar which has resulted in driving away hunger from thousands of homes. The people know that swaraj means their power over the purse, the law, the police, and the military. They know that there can be no peace till the Punjab wound is healed and the Khilafat wrong is redressed.

The nations have progressed both by evolution and revolution. The one is as necessary as the other. Death, which is an eternal verity, is revolution as birth and after is slow and steady evolution. Death is as necessary for man's growth as life itself. God is the greatest Revolutionist the world has ever known or will know. He sends deluges. He sends storms where a moment ago there was calm. He levels down mountains which He builds with exquisite care and infinite patience. I do watch the sky and it fills me with awe and wonder. In the serene blue sky, both of India and England, I have seen clouds gathering and bursting with a fury which has struck me dumb. History is more a record of wonderful revolutions than of so-called ordered progress—no history more so than the English. And I beg to inform the correspondent that I have seen people trudging slowly up mountains and have also seen men shooting up the air through great heights.

Swaraj is India's birthright. The British system has balked her of it. India is struggling to regain her lost liberty, and in doing

so she is trying not to repeat but to make new history. In the process she betrays a woeful desire to repeat it as in Bombay, Madras and Malegaon. Malabar is not to be mixed up with the movement. Independence necessarily means freedom to err. Lastly, I assure the writer and others who think like him that the movement is not one of ill will but of goodwill towards all. Time alone can prove the truth of it. The agony does not permit us to see the new birth concealed beneath it. Let us watch, wait, and pray.

Young India, 2-2-1922

130. PRACTISING LAWYERS AND VOLUNTEERING

To

THE EDITOR, *Young India*

SIR,

1. Is it permissible for practising lawyers to enrol themselves as volunteers?

Writing about lawyers in *Young India*, dated the 12th instant,[1] you observe, "But the Congress[2] has purposely opened an honourable door for them. The original draft was perhaps uncertain as to any but full non-co-operators being entitled to sign the volunteers' pledge. The conditions for them are easy of fulfilment, being mostly matters of belief."

On the other hand, in a report of your conference with the Bengal delegates at Ahmedabad,[3] published in *The Tribune* of 20th January 1922, the following passage occurs:

"Questioned as to how a practising lawyer can serve the country according to the resolution, Mahatmaji said:

A practising lawyer can certainly wear khadi but he cannot be a volunteer.

P: I fear that work shall stop in some places for want of men.

MAHATMAJI: . . . You will certainly get their help in conncetion with your work among the untouchables, or for temperance work or in connection with swadeshi, but they cannot be members of the Volunteer Corps. The Volunteer Corps is being formed in defiance of Government notification and only those are fit to go to jail who are pure-minded men."

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 12-1-1922, under the sub-title "About Lawyers".

[2] Held at Ahmedabad in December 1921

[3] For the report as published in *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 14-1-1922, *vide* "Interview with Bengal Delegates", 29-12-1921.

Is this report in any way materially incorrect or has there been lately a change in your views on the subject? To the ordinary practising lawyer the matter is not quite free from difficulty. For, whilst the Congress resolution[1] is comprehensive enough to include co-operators and non-co-operators, lawyers and laymen alike, it seems quite inconsistent, almost hypocritical, on the part of a practising lawyer to enrol himself as a volunteer.

For one thing, it is entirely against the spirit of all the Congress resolutions on non-co-operation and your own interpretations of them, that a man, who has failed to obey the call of the country, should appear before the public in any prominent form of public activity.

2. Clause (4) of the pledge[2] requires every volunteer to wear only "hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar to the exclusion of every other cloth". Is the word khaddar used here in its narrow literal sense, signifying hand-woven cotton cloth or is it used in a more comprehensive sense as to embrace all kinds of fabrics, woollen, cotton, silken etc., made out of hand-spun yarn and woven with the hand?

I am, etc.,
RAMDAS CHHOKRA
BAR-AT-LAW
LYALLPUR

In publishing the foregoing I have removed all the critical part. As I read the Congress resolution, it is certainly open to lawyers to join the Volunteers' Corps. I know that the wording was purposely changed by the Subjects Committee to find room for incomplete non-co-operators. I have not read the report of my conversation with the Bengali delegates in the Khadi Nagar. But I do not remember having said that lawyers could not become volunteers as contemplated by the Congress resolution. My notes in *Young India* were written almost the same time as the conversation. What I distinctly remember having said is that lawyers cannot become office-bearers. They could not become members of executive committees. But the Volunteers' pledge is for the purpose, among others, of nullifying the effect of the disbandment notices of the Government. In my opinion a lawyer who conscientiously signs the pledge is sufficiently pure for the purpose of going to jail. And the very fact of his readiness to go to jail, ensures suspension of practice for the period of imprisonment. Suspension contemplated by the non-co-operation resolution is meant to last till swaraj is attained, which a lawyer may not be able to brave, though he may not mind, by signing the pledge, the risk

[1] & [2] *Vide* "Speech at Congress Session, Ahmedabad-I", 28-12-1921.

of loss of practice should he have to go to jail. In the one case suspension is a certainty, in the other a possibility—very remote, if a large number took the pledge. The gain in lawyers signing the pledge is great. They show their open sympathy with the cause, in a limited sense perhaps, and they definitely and in their own persons advance the cause of swadeshi. I would give much to see the lawyers having the courage of discarding their totally unnecessary foreign cloth and foreign cut and taking up the khaddar dress and thus identifying themselves with the wonderful manifestation of the mass spirit. All the cloth that is hand-spun and hand-woven whether wool, silk or cotton is khaddar. But it is expected that no one will take to silk or woollen khaddar except when it is required by climatic or other urgent considerations. The fashion certainly should be as Dr. Ray says,[1] to wear the coarse khaddar. Let me repeat what I have said before, that khaddar that is coarse to look at is, like tussore silk, soft to the touch, and protects the skin much better than the soft-looking khaddar.

Young India, 2-2-1922

131. TO KHOJA BROTHERS AND SISTERS

A Muslim friend has written a long letter about the poor progress of swadeshi among the *Khojas*[2]. I reproduce the following portion from it:[3]

I have not addressed a special appeal to the *Khojas* till now, as I had no occasion to do so. We cannot ignore even a group of five men in this national and religious struggle, not to speak of a group of 2,50,000. We should accept what people give and then appeal to them for more. The *Khojas* are in fact a prominent community. They have money and also ability; some of them are men of wide outlook. They have some liberal-hearted gentlemen among them. Sometimes I even meet open-hearted men and women belonging to that community. Some of them, I know, read *Navajivan* carefully and regularly. If I could, I would certainly draw the *Khoja* brothers and sisters towards non-co-operation or, if not to that, at least towards swadeshi.

Swadeshi is such an all-embracing and simple duty which everyone can discharge that no Indian should ever forsake it.

[1] In his preface to the booklet *Charkha* by Satis Chandra Das Gupta

[2] A community among Muslims

[3] Not translated here. The correspondent had asked Gandhiji to address a special appeal to the two and a half lakh *Khojas* and persuade them to adopt khadi and spinning.

An eight-year-old Telugu girl writes: "Having faith that swaraj can be won through the spinning-wheel, I ply it regularly and spin. I believe that we shall get swaraj if we do this."

I have told this girl in reply that my faith in the spinning-wheel is the same as before. I certainly believe that, only if the people start spinning daily as a matter of religious duty, give up foreign cloth, wear khadi and all the time pray to God for help while spinning and do no more, we shall win swaraj.

Those people, therefore, who do not understand all the items in the non-co-operation programme, or if they understand them, do not have the strength to act as required, should at any rate start following the swadeshi-dharma immediately. Many *Khoja* sisters have told me that, owing to the custom of wearing silk and fine cloth, the poorer among them are not able to attend *Khoja* gatherings. Some fail, out of timidity, to give up foreign cloth and some are so much enamoured of silk clothes and fine muslin that they turn up their noses at the very thought of khadi. People who thus despise anything belonging to their own country practically become foreigners though native born. Those people, especially, who give up the use of swadeshi cloth—cloth woven by women from whatever quality of yarn is available—should certainly be regarded as traitors to the country.

If all Hindus and Muslims behave in this manner, how can the country's poverty be abolished? What occupation but stone-breaking will poor women then have? Even a famous chemist like Dr. P. C. Ray has been convinced that famine will vanish from Bengal not through his researches in chemistry but through the spinning-wheel. He has only recently got designed a spinning-wheel called the Khulna spinning-wheel and supplies such spinning-wheels to the famine-stricken people through his numerous factories. He no more gives them free rice but tells them that they should spin in order to get rice. In this way, he has been introducing the spinning-wheel in the poverty-stricken villages of Khulna. He has taken a pledge that, if the four villages there with which he is in very close contact do not, within six months, spin enough yarn to meet their requirements, he will have nothing to do with them. This saintly chemist now wears only khadi and takes pride in doing so. He feels ashamed to wear anything except khadi.

Khoja brothers and sisters should ponder over such examples and follow them. I know that in a small community like the *Khojas*, among whom poverty is practically unknown, it is difficult for anyone to adopt simplicity all at once. They make dona-

tions to charities and feel that they have done their duty. I shall say this to them. "Why do you believe that you are a small community? Do you not include yourselves among the thirty crores [of Indians]? You certainly have your share of their joys and sorrows. As long as even one brother out of these thirty crores is only skin-and-bone and even one sister has to sell her honour for want of employment, you, I and all others should feel ashamed." I hope, therefore, that the *Khojas* and such other communities which have not yet appreciated the importance of swadeshi will come to appreciate it immediately and that the spinning-wheel and khadi will be introduced in all *Khoja* homes, be they rich or poor, and I hope also that not only will no one feel ashamed to wear khadi but actually everyone will look upon it as a real ornament.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 2-2-1922

132. EXTRACT FROM LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

BARDOLI
February 3, 1922

I envy your spinning-wheel and *Ramayana*. The latter, I hope, is not a wretched translation of Valmiki, but the original of Kamban[1] of which I have read so much in Pope's[2] Tamil Handbook.[3]

Jail Diary

[1] Author of the Tamil *Ramayana*

[2] G. U. Pope (1820-1908); did missionary work in South India; author of *First Lessons in Tamil*, *A Handbook of the Ordinary Dialect of the Tamil Language* and other works

[3] On p. 176 of his *Handbook* (7th Edition, 1911) G. U. Pope refers to Kamban as "a great master of Tamil rhythms",

133. LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM

BARDOLI,
February 3 [1922][1]

MY DEAR SUNDARAM,

I have your notes. Of course you do not expect me to write to you often. I am prayerfully following your development under silence. You will certainly benefit by it. One meal may be called a semi-fast, often it is no fast at all. But it mat[ters] little what it is called. You are going through discipline and that is enough.

If you are not giving regularly three to four hours to the spinning I [shou]ld strongly advise you to do so now.

I entirely agree with you that to perfect oneself is to serve one's country to perfection. And perfect service of the country is possible only when it is not inconsistent with the service of whole humanity. The ways of perfection are many. Some attain it by silent meditation and some by act[ive] work. The motive in either case must be love of service.

You need not, therefore, worry about Bardoli so long as you are sure that what you are doing is in the same direction.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3202

134. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

BARDOLI,
February 3, 1922

CHI. MAHADEV,

I hope you got my reply to your letter. I make use of your letters regularly.

I do not see any difficulty as long as you do everything with the permission of the jailor. There can be still less difficulty when it is necessary to break the jail rules deliberately and openly. I have already written to explain when the rules may be disobeyed.

[1] The original has "1921", but on February 3, 1921, Gandhiji was not at Bardoli, nor was the Bardoli problem an issue under discussion; the year 1921, therefore, is evidently a slip for 1922.

You must have seen that a decision has been taken that Bardoli should make the start. I have now, according to our practice, sent an ultimatum to the Viceroy which expires on the 11th. This means that we have got to do something tangible on that day. My letter must have reached the Viceroy today. If he concedes the demands put forth in it, civil disobedience will be suspended for the time being. The demands are that the Viceroy should withdraw his notification, should release the prisoners and declare that our peaceful activities will not be interfered with. If he concedes these demands, we would resume our work of organizing our movement peacefully. Freedom of the Press is covered by our demands. The Viceroy will not perhaps grant this demand, but he will have to ultimately, if Bardoli shows its strength of self-sacrifice and if the other parts of the country remain peaceful.

You must now be running self-government there. You should elect the president and other office-bearers and see to it that everyone accounts for every minute of his time.

Ramdas and Krishnadas are with me. Gangabehn too has come. In a few days, I shall call some weavers, spinners, etc., from the Ashram. True, weaving activity here is progressing rather too slowly.

Vithalbhai will most probably stay here.

Your health ought to become very good.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 7866

135. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

BARDOLI,
February 4, 1922

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your wire. I did not expect better results about East Africa, nor do I expect more from South Africa at present. The Indians will all the same hold their own somehow. Whilst you should do all you can, I would like you to see with me that it is not to be expected that the condition in the colonies can possibly improve before it has considerably improved in India. You can have no notion of the wicked deeds that are happening in India in the name of Law and Order. They are really worse than in the Punjab. Fortunately now the people are knowingly sub-

mitting—not out of their weakness but out of their strength. There is room still for improvement I know. Hence the decision of Bardoli.

If there is anything on which we must talk, you will come over to Bardoli. It is 1½ hours' journey from Surat. There is a good train from Colaba to Surat at 9.20 p.m. reaching Surat at 6 a.m. You reach Bardoli at 10 a.m.

You must read my letter[1] to the Viceroy.

With love,

Yours,
MOHAN

From a photostat : G.N. 2609

136. ANGAD'S MISSION OF PEACE

It is a rule of civilized fighting that a warrior, having mobilized all his strength, acts with the utmost modesty. From then onwards, he never forsakes courtesy. At the commencement of every battle, he gives due warning to the opponent, cautions him and requires him to rectify his mistake and remove the cause of the conflict.

Rama made such an appeal to Ravana. On arriving at Setubandh Rameshwar[2], he collected together his army of *vanaras*[3] and held a discussion as to who should convey the warning to Ravana. To many, of course, this step seemed unnecessary, while some saw weakness in it. To make an appeal to a proud person like Ravana amounted to feeding his pride. Rama listened to these arguments attentively and explained to his army that Rama's soldiers should not worry whether the peace mission would have any effect on Ravana or not. They should only think of what civilized behaviour required of them. If this made Ravana prouder, he would become all the more over-confident. What would Rama lose by that? He was bound to become the stronger for having given due warning and done his duty. He chose the strong, patient, and courteous Angad and sent him on a peace mission to Ravana. The latter, of course, got irritated. Was he likely to listen to reason? In the end, however, he lost his kingdom and his life.

[1] Of February 1, 1922

[2] A town on the southern tip of India

[3] Monkeys

Following this same principle of civilized behaviour, we have sent a courteous peace offer to the Viceroy. He is not likely to pay attention to it. How does that affect us? Actually, his not paying attention to it will greatly increase our strength. The world, too, will turn more definitely in our favour. Our world of course means our brothers, who still think that we are misguided and who support the Government.

This time the issue is different. Before we secure a settlement about the Khilafat, the Punjab or swaraj, we have to settle accounts with the Government and its supporters in regard to another matter.

This Government has always maintained its control by distracting the people's attention. The real disease is ignored and attention is focussed on something else. The Bengalis' disease was the grievance about partition. If they were driven by t at disease to throw bombs, the Government described this bomb-throwing as their disease and tried to make the people forget the original disease. Using the bomb-throwing as an excuse, it tried systematically to harass innocent citizens and to emasculate the people. A like disease was the Rowlatt Act. In the excitement caused by that disease, the Punjab became delirious. The Government perpetrated a massacre in order to cure the province of this disease, and in this way tried to conceal the original disease. Now, the country suffers from the triple fever of the Khilafat, the Punjab and swaraj. It is in agony with suffering. A fire within sometimes leads to insanity. Taking this insanity to be the real malady, the Government has adopted a policy of repression. Thus, it has become a rule with it to make the people forget the real malady, to look upon its effects themselves as the disease and to follow a policy of repression to cure them of that.

We have now learnt by experience that we should give the Government no opportunity to deceive the people. We may not mind whether or not it cures the real malady, but we should not let it assume the evils resulting from that disease to be the disease itself and try to suppress them. The Government has maintained its rule till today by doing exactly this. If the people are hurt by any mistake of the Government or by its arbitrary actions, and even lose their head in consequence, then in suppressing them the Government will try to make the public forget its high-handedness; this we should not permit it to do. If we can wrest from it this weapon for ever, it will not be able to adopt autocratic methods. Once repression becomes impossible autocracy will give way to the reign of public opinion.

Fortunately, the Government itself has focussed attention on this issue by resorting to repression. We should forthwith take up the challenge. The Government may harass us as much as it likes, but a fourth demand has been added to the earlier three, and it should get priority over them. We should create conditions in which it would be impossible for the Government to resort to repression.

Repression means gagging us, dissolving our associations and suppressing our organs of public opinion. How can we bear Lalaji's *Bande Mataram* being forced to stop publication? Can we see Mazharul Huq Saheb's *Motherland* being suppressed? Jafar Ali Khan's *Zamindar*, Habib Khan's *Siyasat* and Radhakishan's *Pratap*—all these have been suppressed. The *Independent* was suppressed long ago, and so was the *Swaraj* of Prayag. The remedy for all this must surely be in our hands. Such repression ought not to be allowed to go on.

A government which does not wish to submit to public opinion will always try to silence protests by the people. If it fails in the attempt, that will be its defeat. In the peace offer, therefore, which has been dispatched from Bardoli, the demand that the Government should stop repression is given the first place. When we can express our views freely, when our organs are allowed to be published and we can form our associations in freedom, we are as good as free; three-fourths of swaraj will have been then established. A vigorous expression of public opinion will by itself suffice to bend the Government. It is certainly part of the meaning of swaraj that we should have freedom of action and expression. Only murder will be outlawed then. Even under swaraj, we shall not get the right to murder anyone.

It has been indicated in that peace offer that, if the Government releases all persons imprisoned for peaceful activities and stops repression, we shall suspend civil disobedience for the present. In aggressive civil disobedience, an individual or a group respectfully disobeys even innocent man-made laws on purpose to defy authority. The civil disobedience which we are carrying on all over the country today has been forced on us and, therefore, it is defensive. One simply cannot avoid it. This means that we express our view though the Government gags us, hold meetings though these are prohibited, publish newspapers when orders are passed for their closure. All this is defensive civil disobedience. We have been offering it and will certainly go on offering it as long as arbitrary orders continue to be issued. But the other type of civil disobedience, which is not for self-defence but is meant

to harass the Government, which is a form of revolt, we may call off if the Government abandons its policy of repression. I feel that we should suspend it on this condition. For, if the Government removes the restrictions over our speech, our pen and our associations, it will have to concede our other demands in a short time.

That is to say, the task before Bardoli today is to secure the release of our fighters and compel the Government to give up repression. If Bardoli achieves this, it will have done its job fully.

If, however, the Viceroy does not concede even this, what will Bardoli do? If he does not concede even the right to express public opinion, how can we avoid launching aggressive civil disobedience? A man may be on the defensive up to a certain limit, but beyond that he may even start an offensive. Aggressive civil disobedience may be looked upon as a kind of non-violent offensive.

We have explained all this to the Viceroy. By making this peace offer, we have shown the highest culture. The offer means that, if the Viceroy grants by the 11th instant the demand made on behalf of Bardoli, the civil disobedience to be started by the latter will be postponed for the time being. After the fighters are released, we shall carry on the fight as all of us together may decide to do. Personally, I believe that, if our demand is accepted, there will be little need for us to start mass civil disobedience. The acceptance of our demand can mean nothing else. I, therefore, think that the demand for freedom of speech, writing and association is unlikely to be accepted.

Bardoli should go ahead with all its preparations. Deficiencies which still remain should be removed and every man and woman should pray to God for strength to bear loss of life or property.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-2-1922

137. MY SPEECH AT SURAT

I like to give summaries of others' and my own speeches and I know I have the ability to do this, but I rarely get time for that. It happens that I have the time and the inclination to give a summary of my speech at Surat on the 31st.[1]

On that day, there was a meeting of the Working Committee in Surat. It was attended by Hakim Ajmal Khan, Mian Chhotani, Dr. [M.A.] Ansari, Dr. Choithram [Gidwani], Shri Kaujalgi and Shri Vithalbhai Patel, all members, and me. Taking advantage of this occasion, they had arranged a meeting for the citizens of Surat. It had been decided that I should not attend the meeting and so I was busy with my work. Meanwhile, Shri Dayalji came and informed me that the audience demanded my presence. The reason was that Dr. Choithram had needlessly dropped a remark at the meeting that I might possibly be arrested within ten days. On the audience insisting that, in that case, they would like to see me, Shri Dayalji came to persuade me and I went.

Generally, I go to a meeting prepared with an outline of what I am going to say. This time, however, I had not thought about anything at all. But the thought which had been in my mind for some time past came up vividly before me and I put it before the citizens of Surat in such emphatic language as I had not used before. I think every Gujarati should know what I said.

I should like to see that same thought in everyone's mind. I, therefore, wanted to give my Surat speech for the benefit of all.

There was a time when I felt how good it would be if I were in jail. But now my desire to go to jail has nearly vanished. I feel that imprisonment is only a rest and a luxury for me. I have no fear at all that, if the Government imprisons me, it will harass me in jail. Other prisoners have had to suffer more or less, and so their imprisonment had and continues to have value to that extent. And so this is what I said.[2]

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 5-2-1922

[1] & [2] For the speech, *vide* "Speech at Public Meeting, Surat", 31-1-1922.

138. HOPES HELD OUT

Bardoli has held out great hopes. May God grant the people of Bardoli courage and good sense! Just as a pledge was taken in the masjid in Pretoria in South Africa,[1] just as this was done at Muzaffarpur for Champaran,[2] just as the mill-hands of Ahmedabad took a pledge under a tree on the river-bank,[3] just as the *Patidars* of Kheda took a pledge at Nadiad,[4] so the representatives of the *Patidars* of Bardoli took a pledge under a tree and they and others did so once again in the Conference *pandal*.

In the same way as the previous pledges were fulfilled somehow, will not God help us to fulfil this one too? Some will fall and others will take their place; in the end, however, will not our hopes be fulfilled? Truth always wins, and it is the divine law that, as long as there is even one person prepared to lay down his life to vindicate truth because it is truth, so long is the victory of truth certain even though crores may be ranged against it. This law admits of no exception.

But then, have I made a mistake in trusting Bardoli? I go on making mistakes and every time God rectifies them. People deceive me a thousand times; even so, how can I distrust them? As long as I see the slightest excuse for trusting people, I will certainly trust them. It is foolish to continue trusting after one has had definite ground for not trusting. But to distrust a person on mere suspicion is arrogance and betrays lack of faith in God. It is faith that keeps the world going.

If I knew that certain people always deceived me and yet I went on trusting them, there would be no limit to my foolishness. The people of Bardoli have been so frank with me that I felt it a sin to distrust them. I was sceptical when I sat down for discussion with their representatives, but they inspired trust in me.

The people of Bardoli are simple-minded and trustful; they do not care for comforts. They are neither very rich nor very poor; they are not violent, nor are they cowards. They are not quarrelsome but affectionate. There are no serious disputes among them. They have maintained cordial relations with the officials. Since they have no local grievances, their request to be allowed to fight

[1] *Vide* Vol. V.
[2] *Vide* Vol. XIII.
[3] & [4] *Vide* Vol. XIV.

is altogether unselfish. They have worked hard to make themselves fit and spared no effort to that end. They have not become perfect in the matter of swadeshi, but they are trying honestly to be so. They have shaken off untouchability to an extent to which no other part of the country has done. I, therefore, believe that, if any taluka is fit [for civil disobedience], Bardoli certainly is.

Some people may feel that the people of Bardoli are known to be rather meek and so they will soon get tired of going to jail, will be afraid to face death and will lose all courage when the Government starts seizing their properties. My experience right to this day has been that it is the meek who patiently submit to suffering. Aggressive people cannot bear suffering. They make others suffer.

And is not this struggle itself meant for the meek? It is planned not to turn the meek into aggressive people but to make them brave and to teach the aggressive to be humble, while preserving their courage. If the struggle can be won only by aggressive people courting imprisonment, we may take it that we are already defeated for, in that case, it is they who will rule. If that happens, we shall have to say that God is the support, not of the meek, but of the aggressive. Then Europe's doctrine of might being right will hold good even here. Is it for this that the Ali Brothers, Das, Lalaji and Motilalji have gone to jail?

We wish to eschew an aggressive spirit, as also hypocrisy, arrogance, violence, untruth, brute force, etc., and to ensure victory of non-violence, straightforwardness, humility, simplicity, truth and soul-force. Therefore, the first quality we should look for is what we call meekness. When meekness is infused with courage, it shines at its best. I expect this to happen in Bardoli too.

However, Bardoli has much more to do yet than what it has already done. It will have to work harder still. I heard these new words in Bardoli—"*Ujla lok*"[1] and "*Kaliparaj*"[2]. The former include *Patidars, Vanias,* Brahmins and others. The latter include *Dublas* and others. The people who have taken interest in and joined this struggle are the so-called respectable classes, and especially the *Patidars* among them. It is believed that the people of the *Kaliparaj* classes will follow the others and it seems likely that they will do so. But that will not be enough. Even the people of the *Kaliparaj* classes should learn to think of the country's good. They also should

[1] Literally, fair-complexioned people

[2] Literally, dark-complexioned people

share in the [national] awakening. That they do not do so means that they live in utter slavery. The very distinction of respectable people and *Kaliparaj* classes should disappear. That people should think of themselves as higher or lower in relation to some others is an intolerable state of affairs. God alone is high and we are all low. If there are any grades in God's court, they must be according to one's deeds. Those who have served more will be high, those who have served less will be low. That is to say, in God's court a servant will become the leader. If a Sudra becomes a man of knowledge, there will be no Brahmin like him. He alone is a Brahmin who has no other use for his knowledge than service to others. If any Sudra can rival a Brahmin in service, the latter will be a Brahmin only in name. A Brahmin should have courage, practical wisdom and the spirit of service in a superlative degree, for he possesses knowledge. With the help of his knowledge he can display these three virtues to best effect. If, however, a Brahmin is timid, lacks practical wisdom and, giving up service, starts playing the leader, then he is no man of knowledge; he is an egotist. Hence the respectable and the *Kaliparaj* classes in Bardoli will have to reverse their roles. It will be best if the very word *Antyaj* is never used in Bardoli.

Volunteers, therefore, should now try to bring the *Kaliparaj* classes gradually into the movement. It is not enough, moreover, that we admit *Antyaj* children into our schools or permit them to draw water from our wells. We shall have to help the *Antyajas* to rid themselves of the bad habits they may have contracted. It is as necessary to draw their attention to the need for a daily bath and such other rules, to persuade them to give up flesh-eating and to hold the cow in reverence, as it is to mix with them.

The same about swadeshi. One cannot condone the wasting of even one hour by a resident of Bardoli. Men, women and children, all should give their spare time to carding, spinning and weaving. The spinning-wheel, at any rate, should be introduced into every home. It is necessary to remove the almost complete dearth of weavers. The greater the number of young men who learn weaving, the better it will be. Bardoli will be an ideal taluka in every way only when we see attractive khadi being woven in every village or town in it.

There should not be a single village in Bardoli taluka in which the Congress flag does not fly. These are not tasks which can wait till we have won swaraj. Doing this work is swaraj. There will be swaraj when people learn to keep good relations among themselves, to obey one another and respect laws made by themselves.

There is no doubt that the evil of drink exists in Bardoli. People generally think that persuading drink-addicts to give up drinking is a difficult task. The difficulty proceeds from our lack of will. If we reason with friends who drink and open their eyes to the harm done by liquor, they will certainly listen to us.

All this work can be done only if we get a good number of volunteers.

Doing these things is a preparation for jail. It is possible that if we work in this way, we may not have to go to jail at all. Our fitness for going to jail consists in our purity and hence the residents of Bardoli should work unremittingly and remove whatever deficiencies still remain. Only then can the taluka be considered fit enough to shoulder the burden of the whole country.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-2-1922

139. APPEAL TO PEOPLE OF BARDOLI

BARDOLI,
Sunday, Maha Sud 8 [February 5, 1922]

LEAFLET NO. 1

BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF BARDOLI,

I intend to address, as regularly as possible, open letters to you.

It is not a light responsibility which you and I have undertaken. You have taken upon your shoulders a burden for the whole of India. You aspire to stand first in the test.

You wish to make the heaviest sacrifices and, with that end in view, you have been working for complete self-purification.

May God fulfil your wishes. But, then, God's grace does not descend upon us unless we strive.

I have just learnt that *Antyaj* children have already been enrolled in 18 national schools. I was indeed very happy to hear this. As long as there is a single national school without *Antyaj* pupils, it cannot be said that the resolution of the Parishad[1] has been carried out.

Similarly, spinning-wheels must be introduced into every home. No man or woman who has joined non-co-operation may wear anything except hand-spun khadi.

[1] The Bardoli Taluka Conference held on January 29, 1922

I hope that no intelligent person in the Bardoli taluka will pay land revenue, no matter if the Government attaches property, imposes *chothai*[1], carries away cattle or takes away the utensils of daily use. This is the minimum suffering we should bear.

What are we to do, someone may ask, if our lands are confiscated and we are rendered homeless? I do not think that the Government, if it wants to rule in a civilized manner, will confiscate lands. There is no doubt, however, that it has the power to do so if it chooses. We must be ready to become homeless. But anyone who fights for swaraj must have the faith that he will regain his land after swaraj is won. Even in an armed fight, the fighters have the confidence that they will get back their land when they win. How, then, can this peaceful struggle have any other result? But, while the struggle is going on, we should be ready even to lose our lands.

The very basis of this struggle is faith in oneself, that is, faith in God. I pray that all of you should have that faith.

Your servant and well-wisher,
MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]
Gujarati, 12-2-1922

140. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

February 5 [1922][2]

MY DEAR CHILD,

I have your welcome letter. You were certainly right in your attitude. Let the Government do what they choose. Please keep me informed of what goes on. At this stage I am not publishing the news. As you see I am in Bardoli preparing for mass civil disobedience. You must have read my letter to the Viceroy.

With love to you all,

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat of the original in N.A.I.; also *My Dear Child*, p. 74

[1] One-fourth of the assessment exacted as fine for failure to pay revenue dues

[2] The letter to the Viceroy mentioned in the text is evidently that of February 1, 1922.

141. INTERVIEW TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

BARDOLI,
February 5, 1922

I interviewed Mahatmaji on Sunday[1] morning. He was quite hale and hearty and was about to begin in his daily round the item of spinning. His son Ramdas brought him a spinning-wheel and Mahatmaji as he went on turning the wheel replied to my questions . . . .

QUESTION: What has led the Working Committee to lay emphasis on foreign propaganda now, thus reversing the decision of the Nagpur Congress?

ANSWER: The question is wrongly put. The Nagpur Congress did not taboo foreign propaganda by way of dissemination of news and the Working Committee has now called upon me to submit a scheme for dissemination of news in foreign countries and now I am taxing my wits to see what more the country can do beyond its sufferings to disseminate news in foreign countries.

How do you intend to organize the propaganda?

The question I answered by my reply to the first, that I have got to think out whether anything can be done by way of supplementing propaganda through sufferings. My own impression is that sufferings constitute the best and the most eloquent propaganda. However, as the Working Committee has put the burden on my shoulders, I shall endeavour honestly to try and see whether anything more can be done.

Does not the fact that such a radical journal as the *Nation* of London should misread the situation in India and suggest your deportation show that there is abysmal ignorance in England regarding the true significance of your movement and that the Nagpur Congress decision was to a large extent responsible for this state of things?

I do not think so. In my opinion the British public and also other foreign countries are better informed today than they were before the Nagpur Congress. But ignorance such as the *Nation* has betrayed will always be there, when newspapers have to deal with events all the world over. In my opinion such ignorance is inevitable and we shall never be able to overtake it except by being more or less indifferent to what they say but doing everything

[1] February 5

that we can by our action to avoid the possibility of ignorance. Let me give an illustration. When I am deported or even executed the eyes of the whole world would be opened to the enormity of the wrong but not till then. Today English journals are entitled to distrust both my actions and my motives but when I am no longer on the scene to challenge ignorance by my speech these publicists will find it necessary to inform themselves better—that has been my experience. I could not interest South Africa or even India in the question relating to the status of the British Indians till people began to suffer and I have, therefore, learnt that it is no use talking to people who do not want to listen. Our sufferings will create a receptive atmosphere.

What do you think of the suggestion made recently in the *Chronicle* that an alliance of understanding should be come to with the leaders of suffering subject nations like Egypt and Ireland to fight the imperialism of the Western nations by non-co-operation propaganda?

I should love to see such an alliance but that will come in its own time. It is my humble opinion that we are not getting sufficiently advanced in the direction to form a useful alliance. I do not believe in paper alliances. They will come naturally when we are ready.

Do you think that the defeat of the Bengal Government on the resolution for the withdrawal of repression and release of political prisoners will compel the Government to abandon repression or do you expect it to defy the Council? If the Councils are defied, do you not think that the Reforms will be shown once more to be a farce and will it not be a deliberate blow to the self-respect of the co-operators to continue a minute more in the Council?

It is as likely as not that the Government will recede from their untenable policy because of the resolve of the Council. Had there been no non-co-operation such a resolution would have been treated with indifference, but now if they defy the Council, Government will have nothing but naked brutality to fall back upon and I cannot make such interpretation of their action. In my opinion the very fact of repression such as is now going on is positive proof of the farcical nature of the Reforms. But flouting the Council's opinion will certainly be an ocular demonstration to the Councillors of their own impotence.

What do you make out of the release and re-arrest of Lala Lajpat Rai?

I can only pity a government which resorts to such shortsighted folly, of re-arresting Lala Lajpat Rai. It can only stiffen the attitude of the Punjabis and of Indians in general.

Do you expect to be arrested the moment Bardoli begins mass civil disobedience and are you convinced after your stay in Bardoli for over a week that the movement will not collapse in your absence?

It is very difficult to say what government will do to me when the time-limit expires. But I certainly do not expect the people of Bardoli to collapse immediately I am arrested. But if they do collapse, Government's action in arresting me will be certainly justified, by reason of any such weakening. If India is really ready then my arrest like the arrests of all other workers must result in non-co-operative activities being stimulated and the atmosphere of non-violence being retained. Personally I have no misgiving on the point, but it is difficult for anybody to say with certainty what will happen after my arrest. There is so much superstition regarding my supposed powers, human and superhuman, that sometimes I feel that my imprisonment, deportation and execution would be quite justified. This belief in the possession of superhuman powers by me is really a bar to national progress and Government will deserve the thanks of reasonable humanity, if they remove me from the people's midst and do not afterwards become mad themselves, but deal with justice and without terrorism. But recent events do not fill me with any such hope about the Government.

Are you convinced, apart from the resolution at the Bardoli Conference[1], that Bardoli is really fit to undertake such a step? Has Bardoli become self-sufficient so far as production of pure khadi is concerned?

So far as I can see I certainly think that Bardoli is fit. No taluka is so much insured against non-violence as Bardoli and this assurance has undoubtedly counted with me a great deal in making up my mind. It has not been self-sufficient as yet, but it will be so presently. People are willing but further organization is necessary.

Can you still maintain in face of cases of assaults and flogging that still many more sufferings on an extensive scale in the present movement is the only shortest cut to swaraj with minimum sufferings?

I have no doubt about it, because painful as the sufferings are, they would be still more if there was retaliation on the part of people. If people remain sufficiently non-violent, Government efforts would be exhausted for want of reaction. It is a scientific truth which admits of no exception. Therefore, whatever sufferings the people might have to go through now they would be hundred times greater if they offered violence against Government violence.

[1] Of January 29, 1922

May I know if the sufferings of hundreds of young men in jails weigh upon your decision to take steps regarding mass civil disobedience? Do you not think that they should be honourably acquitted as early as possible having gained all that they fought for?

Certainly, and therefore it is that I have made their release and stoppage of all barbarity the exclusive issue for mass civil disobedience at the present moment.

Do you not expect Government to baffle your attempts by conniving at your civil disobedience activities at least for a long time to come? Can they not forgo their land revenue or postpone it till some distant day rather than precipitate an undesirable situation? What steps do you propose to take in that case?

Government can certainly do that. If they do, I will respect their wisdom and restraint by refraining from taking any irritating action. But that really means that, Bardoli having attained its freedom, her example would be infectious and, unless Government want to yield to popular opinion, they will make it a point of prestige to collect revenue at the point of the bayonet.

Do you believe the Muslims of India will stick to the irreducible minimum of the Congress demands with the same zeal even after the Khilafat question is settled to their satisfaction?

I have not a shadow of doubt in my mind about it, if only because what is gained in the matter of the Khilafat can only be retained by a self-governing India untrammelled by any dictation from Downing Street.

Do you notice any special characteristics of the peasantry of Bardoli?

I notice nothing special except the beautiful simplicity and innocence of the Bardoli farmers.

Was the letter recently addressed to the Viceroy due to any sort of inspiration from any of the members of the Malaviya Conference?

It was entirely my own creation. As a matter of fact the members of the Working Committee were for a moment surprised at what they considered was change of front, though I thought that I had sufficiently prepared the ground in the *Navajivan* and *Young India*. There is no change of front in the manifesto, but it is simple adaptability to the exigencies of the situation. Supposing you are making for a point and an impassable barrier has been placed in your way by the enemy. Your point of attack is naturally shifted and you will concentrate all your forces upon the barrier before you make further progress. That is precisely what I have done with the full approval of the Working Committee.

What do you expect those of the Moderates who took part in the Malaviya Conference to do in the event of the failure of the Viceroy to satisfy your conditions?

I would certainly expect them to rally round the standard of free speech, free association and a free Press and I expect them to ally themselves with non-co-operators at least to that extent, unless they find another and more expeditious method of forcing justice on the issue raised by me. So far as I understand there is no difference of opinion in the country.

Do you think the Viceroy will give effect to those conditions?

He ought to.

May I know, if you do not mind, what is going to be your first move in respect of mass civil disobedience?

My first move naturally would be to consolidate the movement for non-payment and then I shall have to see in what other directions I can offer civil disobedience without any danger of violence. You will remember I have the whole of the statute-book to break through save those resolutions which are also a part of the moral government of the universe.

The Bombay Chronicle, 7-2-1922

142. SILENCE DAY NOTES

[*February 6, 1922*][1]

I do not think South Africa Indians are ready for sacrifice nor is the pinch so great there—

East Africa Indians if they have any grit whatsoever should offer every form of passive resistance they can—

Churchill could not have made that speech without having India Office squared. The Viceroy—nothing could be better than that the Viceroy and Montagu should resign on this question[2].

[1] *Young India* of February 16, 1922, carried an article by C. F. Andrews on Churchill's speech mentioned in these notes. On February 4, Gandhiji invited Andrews to Bardoli for a talk; *vide* letter to Andrews of that date. On February 8, Andrews wrote to Gandhiji (S.N. 7896) saying that he had been unable to discuss all that he wished to "on Monday", Gandhiji's "quiet day". These notes must therefore have been made on Monday, February 6.

[2] The question of barring Indians from holding land in the Highlands and reserving it for Europeans only.

But the Indian members too should do likewise, if they have any sense of self-respect—But I am sorry to say I have little hope at the present moment.

Water question is settled here. The "untouchables" can fetch water at the same wells—

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

You need not send my note on spinning if you strongly disapprove of it. We shall discuss it.

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 2633

143. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

BARDOLI,
February 6, 1922

DEAR MR. JAYAKAR,

I have received your letter and your telegram also. I observe that my action in writing to the Viceroy has not pleased the Committee. I am sorry. I thought that I was careful enough if I did not start civil disobedience for nearly a fortnight. I did not understand that it was not right even to write to the Viceroy. I purposely waited for three days before publishing the letter as was your desire.

I have been most careful too regarding what should, in my opinion, be done by those who sympathize with the prisoners and with the objects of the movement. Please convey this to the Secretaries of the Conference.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Story of My Life, Vol. I, p. 556

144. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Monday, February 6, 1922

You again failed to come. I take this to be due to laziness on your part. Whatever decisions you make you must carry out.[1]

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 43

[1] The addressee had agreed to Gandhiji's suggestion to spend the week-ends at Bardoli.

145. LETTER TO PARASRAM MEHROTRA

[*February 6, 1922*][1]

CHI. PARASRAM[2],

I have your letter. Is any work in connection with the spinning-wheel being done in Allahabad?

Blessings from
BAPU

MASTER PARASRAM
ANAND BHAVAN
ALLAHABAD

From the Hindi original: C.W. 5994. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

146. REJOINDER TO GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

[BARDOLI,
February 7, 1922][3]

I have very carefully read the Government's reply to my letter to His Excellency. I confess that I was totally unprepared for such an evasion of the realities of the case as the reply betrays. I will take the very first repudiation. The reply says:

> They (the Government) emphatically repudiate the statement that they have embarked on a policy of lawless repression and also the suggestion that the present campaign of civil disobedience has been forced on the Non-co-operation party in order to secure the elementary rights of free association, free speech and a free Press.

Even a cursory glance at my letter would show that, whilst civil disobedience was authorized by the All-India Congress Committee meeting held on the 4th November at Delhi, it had not commenced. I have made it clear in my letter that the contemplated mass civil disobedience was indefinitely postponed on account of

[1] From the postmark

[2] Parasram Mehrotra was at this time working in the office of the *Independent*; later he became a member of Gandhiji's Secretariat and Hindi teacher in the Ashram.

[3] This rejoinder was dictated by Gandhiji immediately on his seeing the Government's *communique* dated February 6, 1922, (*vide* Appendix II) in the newspapers at Bardoli on February 7, 1922, and was telegraphed to Associated Press at Delhi.

the regrettable events of the 17th November in Bombay. That decision was duly published, and it is within the knowledge of the Government as also the public that Herculean efforts were being made to combat the still lingering violent tendency amongst the people. It is also within the knowledge of the Government and the public that a special form of pledge was devised to be signed by volunteers with the deliberate purpose of keeping out all but men of proved character. The primary object of these volunteer associations was to inculcate amongst the masses the lessons of non-violence and to keep the peace at all non-co-operation functions. Unfortunately the Government of India lost its head completely over the Bombay events and perhaps still more over the very complete hartal on the same date at Calcutta. I do not wish to deny that there might have been some intimidation practised in Calcutta, but it was not, I venture to submit, the fact of intimidation but the irritation caused by the completeness of the hartal that maddened the Government of India as also the Government of Bengal. Repression there was even before that time, but nothing was said or done in connection with it but the repression that came in the wake of the notifications proclaiming the Criminal Law Amendment Act for the purpose of dealing with volunteer associations and the Seditious Meetings Acts for the purpose of dealing with public meetings held by non-co-operators came upon the non-co-operation community as a bombshell. I repeat then that these notifications and the arrests of Deshbandhu Chitta Ranjan Das and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in Bengal, the arrests of Pandit Motilal Nehru and his co-workers in the U.P. and of Lala Lajpat Rai and his party in the Punjab made it absolutely necessary to take up—not yet aggressive civil disobedience—but only defensive civil disobedience otherwise described as passive resistance. Even Sir Hormusjee Wadya was obliged to declare that if the Bombay Government followed the precedents set by the Governor of Bengal, U.P. and Punjab, he would be bound to resist such notifications, that is, to enrol himself as a volunteer or to attend public meetings in defiance of Government orders to the contrary. It is thus clear that a case has been completely made out for civil disobedience unless the Government revises its policy which has resulted in the stopping of public meetings, public associations and the non-co-operation Press in many parts of India.

Now for the statement that the Government "have embarked on a policy of lawless repression". Instead of an ample expression of regret and apology for the barbarous deeds that have been committed by officials in the name of law and order I regret to find

in the Government reply a categorical denial of any "lawless repression". In this connection, I urge the public and Government carefully to consider the following facts whose substance is beyond challenge :

1. The official shooting at Entally in Calcutta and the callous treatment even of a corpse;

2. The admitted brutality of the Civil Guard;

3. The forcible dispersal of a meeting at Dacca, and the dragging of innocent men by their legs although they had given no offence or cause whatsoever;

4. Similar treatment of volunteers in Aligarh;

5. The conclusive (in my opinion) findings of the Committee presided over by Dr. Gokul Chand Narang about the brutal and uncalled for assaults upon volunteers and the public in Lahore;

6. Wicked and inhuman treatment of volunteers and the public at Jullundur;

7. The shooting of a boy at Dehra Dun and the cruelly forcible dispersal of a public meeting at that place;

8. The looting admitted by the Bihar Government of villages by an officer and his company without any permission whatsoever from anyone, but as stated by non-co-operators at the invitation of a planter and the assaults upon volunteers and burning of khaddar and papers belonging to the Congress at Sonepur;

9. Midnight searches and arrests in Congress and Khilafat offices.

I have merely given a sample of many "infallible proofs" of official lawlessness and barbarism. I have mentioned not even a tithe of what is happening all over the country, and I wish to state without fear of successful contradiction that the scale on which this lawlessness has gone on in so many provinces of India puts into shade the inhumanities that were practised in the Punjab if we except the crawling order and the massacre at Jallianwala Bagh. It is my certain conviction that the massacre at Jallianwala Bagh was a clean transaction compared to the unclean transactions described above, and the pity of it is that because people are not shot or butchered, the tortures through which hundreds of inoffensive men have gone through do not produce a shock sufficient to turn everybody's face against this Government, but as if this warfare against innocence was not enough, the reins are being tightened in the jails. We know nothing of what is happening today in the Karachi Jail, to a solitary prisoner in the Sabarmati Jail and to a

batch in Banaras Jail, all of whom are as innocent as I claim to be myself. Their crime consists in their constituting themselves trustees of national honour and dignity. I am hoping that these proud and defiant spirits will not be bent into submission to insolence masquerading in the official garb. I deny the right of the authorities to insist on high-souled men appearing before them almost naked or pay any obsequious respect to them by way of salaaming with open palms brought together or rising to the intonation of "*Sarkar ek hai*". No godfearing man will do the latter even if he has to be kept standing in stocks for days and nights as a Bengal schoolmaster is reported to have been.

For the sake of dignity of human nature I trust that Lord Reading and his draughtsmen do not know the facts that I have adduced or, being carried away by their belief in the infallibility of their employees, refuse to believe in the statements which the public regard as God's truth. If there is the slightest exaggeration in the statements that I have made I shall as publicly withdraw them and apologize for them as I am making them now, but as it is I undertake to prove the substance of everyone of these charges if not the very letter, and much more of them before any impartial tribunal of men or women unconnected with the Government. I invite Pandit Malaviyaji and those who are performing the thankless task of securing a round table conference to form an impartial Commission to investigate these charges by which I stand or fall.

It is the physical and brutal ill treatment of humanity which has made many of my co-workers and myself impatient of life itself, and in the face of these things I do not wish to take public time by dealing in detail with what I mean by abuse of the common law of the country but I cannot help correcting the misimpression which is likely to be created in connection with the Bombay disorders. Disgraceful and deplorable as they were, let it be remembered that of the 53 persons who lost their lives over 45 were non-co-operators or their sympathizers, the hooligans, and of the 400 wounded, to be absolutely on the safe side, over 350 were also derived from the same class. I do not complain. The non-co-operators and the friendly hooligans got what they deserved. They began the violence—they reaped the reward. Let it also not be forgotten that with all deference to the Bombay Government it was non-co-operators, ably assisted by Independents and Co-operators, who brought peace out of that chaos of the two days following the fateful 17th.

I must totally deny the imputation that "the application of the Criminal Law Amendment Act was confined to associations,

the majority of the members of which had habitually indulged in violence and intimidation." The prisons of India today hold some of the most inoffensive men and hardly any who have either resorted to violence or intimidation and who are convicted under that law. Abundant proof can be produced in support of this statement as also of the statement of the fact that almost wherever meetings have been broken up there was absolutely no risk of violence.

The Government of India deny that the Viceroy had laid down, upon the apology of the Ali Brothers, the civilized policy of non-interference with the non-violent activities of non-co-operators. I am extremely sorry for this repudiation. The very part of the *communique* reproduced in the reply is in my opinion sufficient proof that the Government did not intend to interfere with such activities. The Government did not wish it to be inferred that "speeches promoting disaffection of less violent character were not an offence against the law". I have never stated that breach of any law was not to be an offence against it, but I have stated, as I repeat now, that it was not the intention of the Government then to prosecute for non-violent activities although they might amount to technical breach of the law.

As to conditions of the Conference the Government reply evidently omits to mention the two words "and otherwise" after the words "Calcutta speech" in my letter. I repeat that the terms as I could gather from "the Calcutta speech and otherwise" were nearly the same that were mentioned in the resolutions of the Malaviya Conference. What are called unlawful activities of the N.C.O. party being a reply to the notifications of the Government would have ceased automatically with the withdrawal of those notifications, because the formation of Volunteer Corps and public meetings would not be unlawful activities after the withdrawal of the offending notifications. Even while the negotiations were going on in Calcutta the discharge of *fatwa* prisoners was asked for, and I can only repeat what I have said elsewhere that if it is disloyal to say that military or any service under the existing system of Government is a sin against God and humanity, I fear that such disloyalty must continue.

The Government *communique* does me a cruel wrong by imputing to me a desire that the proposed Round Table Conference should be called "merely to register" my "decrees". I did state in order to avoid any misunderstanding the Congress demands as I felt I was in duty bound, in as clear terms as possible. No Congressman could approach any conference without making

his position clear, and I expected the ordinary courtesy of not considering me or any Congressman to be impervious to reason and argument. It is open to anybody to convince me that the demands of the Congress regarding the Khilafat, the Punjab and swaraj are wrong or unreasonable, and I would certainly retrace my steps and so far as I am concerned rectify the wrong. The Government of India know that such has been always my attitude.

The *communique* strangely enough says that the demands set forth in my Manifesto[1] are even larger than those of the Working Committee. I claim that they fall far below the demands of the Working Committee, for what I now ask against total suspension of civil disobedience of an aggressive character is merely the stoppage of ruthless repression, the release of prisoners convicted under it and a clear declaration of policy. The demands of the Working Committee included a round table conference. In my Manifesto I have not asked for a round table conference at all. It is true that this waiving of a round table conference does not proceed from any expedience but it is a confession of present weakness. I freely recognize that unless India becomes saturated with the spirit of non-violence and generates disciplined strength that can only come from non-violence, she cannot enforce her demands and it is for that reason that I now consider that the first thing for the people to do is to secure a reversal of this mad repression and then to concentrate upon more complete organization and more construction, and here again the *communique* does me an injustice by merely stating that civil disobedience of an aggressive character will be postponed until the opportunity is given to the imprisoned leaders of reviewing the whole situation after their discharge, and by conveniently omitting to mention the following concluding sentences of my letter:

> If the Government make the requested declaration I shall regard it as an honest desire on its part to give effect to public opinion and shall, therefore, have no hesitation in advising the country to be engaged in further moulding public opinion without violent restraint from either side and trust to its working to secure the fulfilment of its unalterable demands. Aggressive civil disobedience in that case will be taken up only when the Government departs from its policy of strictest neutrality or refuses to yield to the clearly expressed opinion of the vast majority of the people of India.

I venture to claim extreme reasonableness and moderation for the above presentation of the case.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Viceroy", 1-2-1922.

The alternative before the people therefore is not, as the *communique* concludes, "between lawlessness with all its disastrous consequences on the one hand and on the other the maintenance of those principles which lie at the root of all civilized Governments". "Mass civil disobedience" it adds, "is fraught with such danger to the State that it must be met with sternness and severity." The choice before the people is between mass civil disobedience with all its undoubted dangers and lawless repression of lawful activities of the people. I hold that it is impossible for any body of self-respecting men, for fear of unknown dangers, to sit still and do nothing effective whilst looting of property and assaulting of innocent men are going on all over the country in the name of law and order.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7885

147. LETTER TO MEMBERS OF WORKING COMMITTEE[1]

Confidential (Not for publication)

BARDOLI,
February 8, 1922

DEAR FRIEND,

This is the third time that I have received a rude shock when I have been on the eve of embarking upon mass civil disobedience. The first was in April 1919[2], the second in November last[3], and now again I am violently agitated by the events in the Gorakhpur District. What has happened in Bareilly and Saharanpur where volunteers have been attempting to take possession of Town Halls has added considerably to the shaking. The civil disobedience of Bardoli can make no impression upon the country when disobedience of a criminal character goes on in other parts of the country, both for the same end. The whole conception of civil disobedience is based upon the assumption that it works in and

[1] The following are excerpts from the introductory note in the source: "The civil disobedience at Bardoli, . . . was to have been started on the 12th February, 1922, on the expiry of the time-limit granted to the Viceroy . . . . But Mahatmaji suddenly changed his whole plan of action on the 8th, and . . . circulated a private letter to the members of the Working Committee indicating this change . . . ."

[2] *Vide* Vol. XV.

[3] *Vide* Vol. XXI, pp. 462-5.

through its completely non-violent character. I may be a bad student of human nature to believe that such an atmosphere can ever be brought about in a vast country like India, but that would be an argument for condemning my capacity for sound judgment, not for continuing a movement which is in that case bound to be unsuccessful. I personally can never be party to a movement half violent and half non-violent, even though it may result in the attainment of so-called swaraj, for it will not be real swaraj as I have conceived it. A meeting of the Working Committee is, therefore, being called to consider the question on the 11th instant at Bardoli, first whether mass civil disobedience should not be suspended for the time being; and secondly, whether if it is suspended it should not be discontinued for a definite and sufficiently long period to enable the country to do organizing constructive work and to establish an indisputably non-violent atmosphere. I want to have the guidance of all the friends I can. I would like you to send me your opinion even though you may not be able to attend, either by letter, if it reaches in time, or by wire.

I am sending this letter only to the members of the Working Committee, but I would like you to consult all the friends you meet and if any of them wishes to come to take part in the deliberations please bring or send him or them.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi, pp. 223-4

148. LETTER TO DR. M. S. KELKAR

Wednesday, February 8, 1922

DEAR DR. KELKAR[1],

I think the money was paid to the Committee for swadeshi only. I do wish you will get the expert appointed and set about working soon. Please show this to Mr. Dastane[2]. I note what you say about the preacher. I am on my way to Bombay for a day.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

DR. KELKAR
C/o DR. NULKAR
JALGAON
E. KHANDESH

From a photostat: G.N. 6107

149. NOTES

FROM HIS SOLITARY CELL

Here is a titbit from C. Rajagopalachari from Vellore Jail:

> . . . I am allowed to write one letter a month and to receive similarly one letter a month, and am completely shut out from all politics, news and newspapers. . . .
>
> My asthma persists, though by keeping my stomach light I hold the upper hand over the enemy. I have gone down from 104 to 98 lbs. but that does not matter. . . .
>
> Your eyes would flow with delight if you saw me here in my solitary cell spinning.

This is a curious Government. The same law is supposed to reign in the country and yet what is a crime in Bengal is not a crime in Madras. And the treatment in a Madras Jail is not the same as in a U.P. jail. George Joseph in the Agra Jail has all the comforts and privileges including newspapers. Rajagopalachari in Vellore Jail must live in solitude and have no newspapers. Rajagopalachari does not mind the deprivation of newspapers.

[1] Dr. M. S. Kelkar; claimed to cure all diseases by the use of ice; known popularly as "Ice Doctor".

[2] A Congress worker of Khandesh in Maharashtra

I know that I would esteem it a privilege to be without any, but difference in treatment is obvious. Rajagopalachari's loss of flesh is a more serious matter. This, of course, may not be due to want of nourishing food but if the solitary cell is anything like I know, it must be almost death to an asthamatic patient. When you are locked up in a cell you are in a box with a few holes for just enough ventilation to keep you alive. There is little light and no cross ventilation. The air in a short time becomes thick and foul with your own exhalations. And you are doomed to re-breathe your own emissions. The least that humanity demands is that C. Rajagopalachari should have, if he has not, all the fresh air he can get day and night.

From Delhi Jail

Mr. Asaf Ali writes a descriptive letter from the Delhi Jail. I copy from it extracts of public interest:[1]

> . . . it is a matter of no little surprise to me that my health has appreciably improved since my incarceration. . . .
>
> . . . The discomforts of prison life will be throughout our lives the most cherished of our memories like the scars of warriors. . . .
>
> Kindly remember me to Pandit Motilalji and Jawahar if you write to them as I cannot and please give my love to my Akka, I mean Mrs. Sarojini Naidu.

The reader will remember that civil disobedience in Delhi was started by Mr. Asaf Ali and fifty-two other volunteers.

Sherwani Disbarred

The Allahabad High Court has not enhanced its prestige by disbarring Mr. Sherwani who had disbarred himself long before the Court took action. It is clear that some one must have instigated the Court to take action. Whoever did so has ill-served the High Court of Allahabad. The proceedings against Mr. Sherwani cannot frighten a single lawyer. They must have made some ashamed of being practitioners in a court which punishes a man for his political creed. The Court in my opinion was bound to take public notice of the fact of non-co-operation and therefore of the fact that Mr. Sherwani was precluded by his creed from offering any defence in the lower court.

Lalaji's Rearrest

The Punjab Government could not do even a simple act of penitence gracefully. They were advised that the judge who con-

[1] Only excerpts reproduced here

victed Lalaji and his companions did not know the law. They had therefore to release them. Instead of all being released together they were released separately and some at midnight. But that was by no means the most graceless part of the performance. Lalaji was rearrested immediately after his discharge. By this action the Punjab Government have shown themselves more vindictive than penitent. The release they could not help, nor could they help their pettiness. They did not want Lalaji to be free for a single moment and therefore they rearrested him. Although an under-trial prisoner, his people including his son are not allowed to see him. They knew that Lalaji would not escape "justice" if they served on him a summons. But such a natural and courteous step was too simple for the Punjab Government. I congratulate Lalaji on his rearrest and sympathize with Pandit Santanam, Malik Lalkhan and Dr. Gopichand for their premature discharge.

PENSION OR DEFERRED PAY

I have now procured paragraph 351 of Section 1, Chapter 15 of General Rules regarding ordinary pensions, under which Mr. Joshi of Dharwar has been deprived of his pension. The rule reads as follows:

> Future good conduct is an implied condition of every grant of a pension. The local Government, the Government of India, and the Secretary of State in Council reserve to themselves the right of withholding or withdrawing a pension or any part of it, if the pensioner be convicted of serious crime or be guilty of grave misconduct.
>
> The decision of the Secretary of State in Council on any question of withholding or withdrawing the whole or any part of a pension under this Regulation shall be final and conclusive.

To a layman, it is one and the same thing whether you call it pension or deferred pay or anything else. It cannot be given to a servant who has proved faithless in the discharge of his duty or who, on the termination of active service, by his future conduct proves undeserving. A servant on pension has, perhaps, need to be more careful about his conduct than a servant in active service for the simple reason, that whilst on duty he is under watch, off duty he is on trust. Judged by this standard and considered as a public servant, Mr. Joshi has not only done nothing reprehensible but has done what any honourable man will do, that is to say, in the evening of his life put such talents as he has unreservedly at the disposal of the public, although in law he is entitled to pass his time in rest and retirement. A government responsive to public

opinion cannot be treated as different from the public. The interest of the latter must be the paramount consideration of the former; therefore, if Mr. Joshi is now, in the light of existing facts, throwing in his lot with the public he is as much serving the Government as the country. If Sir Michael belonged to the same public service and was bound by the same code of honour as Mr. Joshi or Maulana Shaukat Ali, it is Sir Michael O'Dwyer who stands condemned out of his own mouth and who, in terms of the regulation I have quoted, ought to be deprived of the pension of which by constant and venomous vilification of his paymasters he is proving himself totally unworthy. That Sir Michael may really believe what he says and may honestly hold the opinion that educated Indians are idiots or traitors to their country and that the uneducated masses deserve to be treated no better than the cattle, is beside the point. God alone knows a man's motive. But man can only judge another by his acts. And just as non-co-operators are very properly and rigidly judged not by their motive as it is set forth in their pledge or declared from a thousand platforms, but by their acts and those of their associates, so also must public servants on pension or otherwise be judged by what they do and not by what they think or say they think.

The Ali Brothers

I reproduce the following telegram[1] received from Karachi by post because it would not be sent by the authorities:

> Maulana Mahomed Ali reduced 25 lbs. in jail. . . .
>
> Medical Officer recommended groundnuts or extract of cheese by way of food for Maulana Mahomed Ali on account of diabetes. Superintendent not disposed but after all provided groundnuts worth one anna per day and on Maulana's insistence raised it to two annas. This serves as his morning meal.
>
> . . . Maulana Shaukat Ali, Doctor Kitchlew, Maulvi Nisar Ahmed, Pir Gulam Majid were asked on Saturday the 28th to submit to search of their person, a practice commonly followed in jail in case of convicts. This consists in making the prisoners absolutely naked with the exception of a *langoti*[2] made loose. The prisoners in this condition are asked to raise hands and open their mouths as though to show if there was anything hidden anywhere. This humiliation Maulana Shaukat Ali and his companions were saved so far. On Saturday the 28th on being asked to submit to this they refused. On Monday the 30th their person was forcibly searched and as punishment for refusing voluntarily to submit to this

[1] Only excerpts reproduced here

[2] Loin-cloth

indignity, humiliation, the forenamed leaders have been confined to solitary cells for one month. . . .

Maulana Mahomed Ali protests and demands like treatment.

The leaders in jail ready to obey all jail rules except those that offend against their religion or against their sense of honour and dignity as Indians or human beings.

The jail authorities were up to the last moment asked by the leaders to refer the matter to Government but they refused to wait[1].

It is evident that instructions have gone forth that the policy of wise discretion is to give place to the policy of cast iron rigidity of enforcement of prison rules. Imagine Maulana Shaukat Ali or any of the high-spirited prisoners standing almost naked before the jailor and in the presence of one another and submitting to what to them must be a most humiliating examination. I can understand the necessity and utility of such examination of confirmed criminals for whom alone the ordinary prison regulations are framed, but it is nothing short of lunacy to enforce obedience to such regulations on the part of men who apart from their political agitation have been regarded as orderly citizens and in some cases even as distinguished public men. To enforce some of the present regulations in respect of such prisoners is hopelessly to ignore the reality and to court trouble. Ordinary discipline must be exacted from the best of men when they happen to be in prison, more so when they court imprisonment. Discomfort of jail life they must expect and cannot grumble at. Respect for the jail officials must be exacted from them if they will not give it voluntarily and gracefully. But discipline must not take the form of humiliation. Discomfort must not be torture, and respect must not take the form of crawling on one's belly. And therefore, on pain of being put in irons, in solitary confinement or of being shot, non-co-operating prisoners must decline even in the name of discipline to stand naked before the jailor, must decline in the name of discomfort to wear stinking clothes or to eat food that is unclean or indigestible and must similarly decline even in the name of respect to open out their palms or to sit in a crouching position or to shout *Sarkar ek hai* or "Sarkar Salam" when a jail official is passing. And if the Government is now intent upon putting us through the fire in the jails and subjects us to physical pains in order to bend us, we must respectfully decline to be humiliated and must fall back upon God to give us strength to withstand studied humiliation and to suffer physical tortures in-

[1] Write

stead. Let the proud Brothers and their comrades purify the Karachi Jail. Let the proud Sindhi Professor Kripalani sanctify the Banaras prison, for I understand that Professor Kripalani and his pupils who are undergoing imprisonment in Banaras have found it impossible to countenance the unutterable humiliations that those non-co-operators who have been brought to the Banaras Jail have been subjected to. It passes comprehension that in the United Provinces, where the treatment of political prisoners is supposed to be ideal, whilst it is certainly all that could be desired in Agra and Lucknow, that in Banaras and elsewhere it should be otherwise. Does it mean that the local officials are out of control and disregard orders from headquarters and have become a law unto themselves? Let the public imagine from these incidents what untold sufferings the criminals must be undergoing in the jails of India. I am not inclined to believe that political prisoners are alone specially singled out for that treatment. On the contrary, I believe that the real criminals are much worse treated for they are easily cowed down in jails, and jailors and warders being almost irresponsible, become despotic and subject criminals to heartless treatment. We who have in our ignorance or selfishness hitherto supported a system of government under which a microscopic minority has brought under subjection millions of human beings will have to answer before our Maker for many a crime against humanity committed nominally in the name of law and order, but really in the interest of this minority—crimes that have never seen the light of day and of which we could not have even heard but for the immolation of non-co-operators.

In the face of the humiliation sought to be imposed upon the prisoners, it seems petty to have to criticize the meanness of authorities in Karachi in witholding from Maulana Mahomed Ali even the diet prescribed by the jail doctor and necessitated by the disease which the Maulana is suffering from. I am really hoping that the information about the refusal to supply the Maulana with cheese or enough groundnuts is not correct, and that there is a reasonable explanation for it.

But be the treatment what it may, the course before those who are not in prison is clear. We must not be irritated into taking a false or a hasty step. We are dealing with a system that is rotten to the core and that has debased humanity whether English or Indian. We are really dealing with a disease. I refuse to think that either Englishmen or Indians are fiends by deliberation. On the contrary, I am confident that they do not know what they are doing. It is certain that they do not think

that they are doing anything wrong and it is highly probable that many of them even consider that terrorism is a part of humane treatment in given circumstances, even as many of us in our impatience do things in ordinary relations which we cannot justify except under the plausible plea of necessity.

Since writing the foregoing I have received the further news that the Brothers have refused to be voluntarily searched, that search was forcibly made, that they were "punished in cells" (meaning, I presume, solitary confinement) and that the men in charge were behaving in an ungentlemanly manner. I should be extremely sorry to find all this to be true. There was reason to believe that the Government attitude towards known public men in the prisons would be perfectly gentlemanly and that they would not be subjected to any indignities. If the reported ill treatment of the Ali Brothers proves to be true, the Government will have themselves to thank if the agitation against them reaches white heat.

It is evident that God wants non-co-operators to be tried through and through. I know that the Brothers are brave enough to stand the fiery ordeal and come out scatheless. All the Karachi prisoners are picked men, well able to take care of themselves. The public will nevertheless feel keenly the indignities that are being heaped upon the Brothers, Dr. Kichlew, Pir Gulam Majid and their companions. Notwithstanding all this senseless irritation and provocation we must be self-restrained. Our final salvation lies in the strictest adherence to our pledge. If we feel keenly let us be still more non-violent, not less so; let us further concentrate on civil disobedience, let us lose no time in fulfilling the conditions necessary for civil disobedience. Let Hindus, Mussulmans and other races come still closer, let us rid ourselves of the remnants of foreign cloth still in our possession, let us bestir ourselves to manufacture more hand-spun khadi. Our progress depends upon calmly fulfilling the programme mapped out by ourselves and not wasting a single minute in idle fretting and fuming. Let us not worry about the ill treatment of those who are in jail. The Government have made no terms with us as to treatment. We have unconditionally surrendered our bodies to them even to be hacked to pieces without a quiver if God will give us the strength. We must not lose temper on any account.

False Charges

In their feverish anxiety to support the policy of repression, the officials in charge of the defence of that policy have not hesitated to make use of statements that cannot be supported. Maulana

Abdul Bari Saheb writes to me saying that he has never contemplated, approved of or incited to violence after he entered into the national compact to observe the strictest non-violence in connection with the movement of non-co-operation. He says that he has both preached and practised it fully and conscientiously. The unregistered *Independent* says:

> Maulana Abdul Bari writing in the daily *Hamdam* contradicts the statement made by Sir William Vincent in the course of the Censure Debate that he (the Maulana) was a votary of violence. He denies having made any speech during the last four months. In his latest written address read before a meeting of the Muslims, he strongly advocated non-violent non-co-operation as the only means open to the Indian Muslims for the redress of the Khilafat wrong. He has not lost hope, he says, in the non-violent Congress and Khilafat programme in the end forcing the hands of the British Government to redress the Khilafat and Punjab wrongs and enabling India to remain as a free partner of the British Commonwealth of self-governing nations.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru writes as follows about the charge brought against him:

> Sir Ludovic Porter, Finance Member of the Government of the United Provinces, is reported to have made the following remarks in his speech delivered in the U.P. Council on the 23rd January:
>
> "I allude to Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru. His final effort was a speech somewhere in the west of the Provinces in which he quoted word by word the sedition section, i.e., the promotion of disaffection against the Government as by law established, and the section which deals with promoting hatred between classes of His Majesty's subjects, and he said that the object of his life was to carry out this promotion of sedition and disaffection."
>
> This is incorrect. On no occasion and in no speech have I quoted the sedition section or any other section of the Penal Code word by word or in any other manner. I do not carry about a copy of the Indian Penal Code with me and I have not thought it worth while to learn any of its sections by heart. What I have stated, however, on more than one occasion is that I considered it my business, as it was the business of every Indian, to promote disaffection against the present system of government in India. And I was thus continually sinning against Section 124 A of the Indian Penal Code. I have never, I trust, said anything which might lead people to think that I desire to promote "hatred between different classes of His Majesty's subjects". I have endeavoured to the best of my ability, whenever an occasion offered itself, to do the very reverse of this. And indeed if it were otherwise I would be a bad non-co-operator and utterly unworthy of being a humble follower of the great leader whose mission

it is to demonstrate anew to the world the invincible might of love and truth.

It never occurred to these officials who have libelled the character of two honourable public men that if they have preached or approved of violence, the charges should be fully proved against them by incontestable evidence. Will Sir William Vincent apologize to Maulana Bari and Sir Ludovic Porter to Pandit Jawaharlal?

A Comedy of Errors

Not knowing any other Lala Shyam Lal but of Rohtak I have committed a bad blunder and have paid premature compliments to Lala Shyam Lal of Rohtak instead of his namesake who is also a *vakil* but of Hissar. I apologize to Lala Shyam Lal of Hissar and accept of him, what Lala Shyam Lal says in his letter, that all the flattering remarks I have made about him apply to the Hissar friend "with greater force". Lala Shyam Lal of Rohtak adds:

> His example is inspiring. Soon after his arrest, his noble wife has thrown herself into the work and this has given great impetus to the Congress activity in the Hissar District.

Caution about Civil Disobedience

Writing of his own District Lala Shyam Lal says:

> The District Magistrate here does not believe in making arrests unless there is apprehension of a breach of the peace. The result is that our volunteers are having their own way. No foreign cloth is being imported. No liquor contract has been sold.

Lala Shyam Lal then inquires whether in the districts where no arrests are made people should go out of their way to court arrest. I thought that I had made the position absolutely clear in previous issues. Whilst we may do nothing to avoid arrest in the ordinary course of our duty, we must not go outside our beat in order to compel arrest. That would be either aggressive civil disobedience or criminal disobedience. The latter is out of question. The former, i.e., aggressive civil disobedience is a right to be exercised when necessary and when we are thoroughly ready, and is also a duty we must discharge if we are ready and circumstances require the performance of it. But aggressive civil disobedience whether mass or individual is a most dangerous weapon though also most effective among all the peaceful weapons at our disposal. I am myself satisfied that the country as a whole is not ready for this form of self-assertion. We have to go through much greater and stricter discipline. We have to understand the exact,

I was almost going to say, the spiritual value of obedience to laws and discipline which may be irksome and even repugnant to us. Assertive civil disobedience is a right that accrues to us only after severe *tapasya* through which we have not yet gone. Any premature resort to assertive civil disobedience therefore may precipitate a crisis we neither anticipate nor want, and which we must avoid by every means we can think of. The least therefore that we must do is to await the result of the experiment I personally wish to conduct. It is a new thing and surely simple prudence requires us to watch that experiment. Indeed, if aggressive civil disobedience, whether mass or individual, is attempted in other parts of India, it is likely to embarrass me and damage country's cause. I invite the attention of all non-co-operators to the resolution of the Working Committee which now makes it incumbent upon all the Congress organizations to refrain from aggressive civil disobedience except with my express consent and so far as I can see the only exception I am likely to make will be in favour of a group of 100 villages in Andhradesha. But even there I have informed Sjt. Konda Venkatappayya that if it is at all possible for him to avoid taking the offensive I would appreciate it and that he would resort to it only if he found that retracing would be demoralizing and if humanly speaking he was certain of non-violence being observed throughout Andhradesha and also certain that the other conditions laid down by the Congress were strictly fulfilled. I have a suspicion that in many parts of India the condition about the hand-spun khadi is not being strictly carried out and that we are not yet everywhere cured of the disease of untouchability. In my opinion the ability to go to jail is of far less consequence than ability and the readiness to observe in their fulness the conditions about Hindu-Muslim-Sikh-Parsi-Christian unity, about untouchability and hand-spun khadi. Without a due fulfilment of these conditions, we shall find that all our going to jail is bravado and so much wasted effort. Self-purification is the main consideration in seeking the prison. Embarrassment of the Government is a secondary consideration. It is my unalterable conviction that even though the Government may not feel embarrassed in any way whatsoever by the incarceration or even execution of an innocent, unknown but a purified person, such incarceration will be the end of that Government. Even a single lamp dispels the deepest darkness. Non-co-operation is not allopathic treatment, it is homœopathic. The patient does not taste the drops given to him. He is sometimes even incredulous, but if the homœopaths are to be trusted, the tasteless drops or the tiny pills of homœopathy are far

more potent than ounce doses or choking pills of allopathy. I assure the reader that the effect of purifying non-co-operation is more certain than the effect of homœopathic medicine. I do wish, therefore, that everywhere non-co-operators will insist upon due fulfilment of all the conditions of civil disobedience. One may be a lawyer, title-holder, even a councillor and yet properly eligible for civil disobedience if he is sincerely non-violent in thought, word and deed, wears hand-spun khadi as a sacred duty, shuns untouchability as an intolerable evil and believes in the unity of all races and classes of India, as for all time essential for the well-being and the attainment, as also retention, of swaraj.

AGGRESSIVE *v.* DEFENSIVE

It is now necessary to understand the exact distinction between aggressive civil disobedience and defensive. Aggressive, assertive or offensive civil disobedience is non-violent, wilful disobedience of laws of the State whose breach does not involve moral turpitude and which is undertaken as a symbol of revolt against the State. Thus, disregard of laws relating to revenue or regulation of personal conduct for the convenience of the State, although such laws in themselves inflict no hardship and do not require to be altered, would be assertive, aggressive or offensive civil disobedience.

Defensive civil disobedience, on the other hand, is involuntary or reluctant non-violent disobedience of such laws as are in themselves bad and obedience to which would be inconsistent with one's self-respect or human dignity. Thus formation of Volunteer Corps for peaceful purposes, holding of public meetings for like purposes, publication of articles not contemplating or inciting to violence in spite of prohibitory orders, is defensive civil disobedience. And so is conducting of peaceful picketing undertaken with a view to wean people from things or institutions picketed in spite of orders to the contrary. The fulfilment of the conditions mentioned above is as necessary for defensive civil disobedience as for offensive civil disobedience.

A WELL-DESERVED SNUB

Mr. P. V. Hanmantrao of Tanjore is reported to have apologized and asked the Madras Government for discharge. The latter have properly asked for security on the ground that a non-co-operator has betrayed the trust reposed in him. The Madras Government say that Mr. Subramania Siva, a prisoner who was ailing and who applied for his discharge, undertook not to take part in politics for some time and has now turned round and denies having apologized. Mr. Subramania Siva is a well-known public

worker. I hope he will clear himself by making a full statement and if he apologized in a weak moment I hope he will have, like Mr. Yakoob Hassan, the courage of making a manly confession. Everybody knows that he is suffering from a fell disease and the public will certainly overlook his weakness if he apologized in the circumstance. He must also keep his promise, if he made it, of not taking part in politics for one year. Non-co-operators cannot afford to be weak, they cannot hide their weakness. Above all they must be scrupulously honest and must rigidly perform all their promises even though they might have been made in a weak moment, unless their performance involves any immorality.

AMONG CHRISTIAN CIRCLES

The talk, I hear, is going the round among Christian circles that I have said in private conversation that, had India been equipped for the use of arms, I would certainly have resorted to and advised the use of arms. I had fondly hoped that such a thing could never have been said and believed of me in India. I assure my Christian and other readers that I have never made any such statement to any person whatsoever. On the contrary, it has been my belief and practice for over forty years deliberately to practise the doctrine of non-resistance to evil, not to retaliate. There are more instances than one in my public life when with the ability to retaliate, I have refrained from doing so and advised friends to do likewise. My life is dedicated to the spread of that doctrine. I read it in the teaching of all the greatest teachers of the world, Zoroaster, Mahavir, Daniel, Jesus, Mahomed, Nanak and a host of others. Indeed, I am not sure that we do justice to Moses when we impute to him the doctrine of retaliation in the sense that he made it obligatory on his followers to exact tooth for a tooth. It may be my wish that is father to the thought. But I do think that in an age when people were unrestrained in their appetite for the enemy's blood, Moses restricted retaliation to equal measure and no more. But I must not lead the reader into religious discussion. Whilst, however, non-violence is now, has ever been, and I pray to God, it ever may be my final creed for all occasions, it is true that there are thousands in the ranks of non-co-operation with whom non-violence is an expedient or a policy to which they are not committed for all time and all circumstances. They believe that for India, as she is constituted, there is no method but that of non-violence for regaining her freedom. And this they believe not merely because she has no arms or training in them but also because with her diverse creeds and races there is nothing for her

but constant internecine strife, if her children began the habit of invoking the god of war for every occasion. The best of us are beginning to see more in the doctrine of non-violence than when we first approached it.

In this connection my attention has also been drawn to a paragraph in the *Dnyanodaya*. Sadhu Sundar Singh, it is there stated, "made quite plain his profound disapproval of Mr. Gandhi's method telling him in so many words that they can lead India to nothing but ruin and useless suffering". I am sorry that the Sadhu's name has been thus dragged into the controversy. But now that it has been, in justice to the Sadhu and the cause, I must say that so far as my recollection goes, not only did he not disapprove of my methods in "so many words" but he entirely approved of them and agreed that India had no other choice. We had the closest communion. The Sadhu came purposely to understand some things about which he had no first-hand knowledge. He did not know, for instance, what the implications of the Hindu-Muslim friendship were and where the minorities stood and whether the movement could remain non-violent to the end. We had long discussions over all these and other matters and he certainly left on me the impression that for a religious man there was no course left open. The greatest difficulty undoubtedly is about the masses keeping non-violent to the end. With men nothing may be possible, for God nothing is impossible. I would fain have avoided any reference whatsoever to our conversation. But the friends who have brought the matter to my notice tell me that Sadhu Sunder Singh is on the waters and that the paragraph in question is being exploited to wean Indian Christians from the movement. It has to stand or fall on its own merits. No certificate can save it if its professors betray their trust; no condemnation can injure it permanently if the professors remain true to it to the end. But I felt that I could not withhold from the public what I knew about Sadhu Sunder Singh's views.

Is a New Age Dawning?

Mr. Pearson has answered the question in the affirmative in his article, the first part of which I am publishing in this issue. Some may consider the article to be too hopeful. It is, however, better to be hopeful than despondent. The best proof perhaps of the dawning of a new age is to be found in the wonderful reception that Europe and America accorded to the Poet of Asia[1] who

[1] Rabindranath Tagore

represents the new spirit and the new hope. He was not honoured for his birth or even for his learning. He was honoured for the new message for which he stands. But it seems almost too much to hope that the dawn will come before the sordid spirit of imperialism, for which Britiain seems to stand, is completely broken up. Britain must cease to be an Empire and become truly a Commonwealth or die before the new age is ushered. She is today the greatest menace to the peace of the world if only because some of her best men sincerely believe that she is the one Power that is keeping the peace today. They refuse to see that an armed or imposed peace is no peace. Unless therefore somehow or other Britain changes her policy and therefore her heart, a world war more serious even than the Anglo-German must precede the dawn. Let us pray and work for the necessary change of Britain's heart.

Too Sacred for Publication

There are things one does not like to see published, not because there is anything secret about them but because they are too sacred for publication. Sometimes the published version gives an impression totally different from the spoken word even though the reporting may be ever so accurate. When I call a little child a fiend in perfect good humour or with a frown, it would not do to report me as having called some one a fiend without giving long explanations as to the why and the how. Some such disservice has been done by the manifestly friendly reporter of a conversation and a discourse at Satyagraha Ashram as reported in *The Bombay Chronicle* of the 2nd instant.[1] I dislike such things being reported. In a swift conversation there are many things understood. An accurate report of such a conversation is impossible without copious footnotes. I am for instance reported as having

[1] The conversation, as also reported in *The Hindu*, 2-2-1922, read: "The night before Mahatmaji called the old occupants to his side and asked their opinion about the Ashram. Different opinions were expressed. Some found the rules of the Ashram strict, others wanted them still more strict. Then the teacher of Hindi at Gujarat Mahavidyalaya, who was formerly at the Shantiniketan, said, 'We from U.P. do not like the food for the evening meal and to get up in the morning at four. Well, it is absolutely impossible for me.' Bapuji smiled and said, 'You see your Shantiniketan is for material progress, while Satyagraha Ashram exists solely for spiritual progress. You say at Shantiniketan there is more individual liberty, but I do not call that liberty. I call it licence. It is nice to get up early. It is after *prarthana* every morning that I write for *Navajivan* and *Young India*. I can concentrate ever so well in the morning than at any other time. You see it is not difficult to get up early if you go to bed early. As for me, you know that ten o'clock is my bed time'."

said that Shantiniketan is for material progress and Satyagraha Ashram exists solely for spiritual progress. When the Poet sees this he will either laugh at it if he remembers that I could not possibly say or mean any such thing about Shantiniketan, or he will be angry and despondent that even I should be so hopelessly ignorant and inartistic as not to see the spirituality of Shantiniketan. The Poet, I feel sure, is not likely to do me the injustice of thinking me capable of holding the belief imputed to me. I could say to the Poet, as indeed I have done, that Shantiniketan lacks discipline. He had laughed over it and even endorsed my criticism and justified it saying he was a Poet and Shantiniketan was for his amusement. He could only sing and make others sing. I was free to introduce all the discipline I liked but he was only a Poet. The reader must know that I have lived at Shantiniketan for more than once. I am permitted to regard it as a home of retreat. My boys have had shelter there and at the Gurukula when I was away in England.[1] My conversation with the Hindi teacher was on the basis that both he and I were lovers of Shantiniketan. How can Shantiniketan be otherwise than spiritual when the author of pure spiritual poetry is the dominating spirit there? I am not so dull as to think that a place where Devendranath Tagore[2] lived could be devoid of spirituality. The readers of *Young India* are aware that I receive spiritual draughts from Shantiniketan from time to time sent by Badadada who is incessantly watching over me and praying for the success of my mission. I hasten to inform the reader that I regard many professors and teachers of Shantiniketan as highly spiritual and good men whose association I have valued as a privilege. I must further inform the reader that I consider Bengal to be the most spiritual among our provinces. The whole of my conversation which is unfortunately reported was carried on in a humorous strain. I have often claimed among lovers of Shantiniketan greater spirituality for Satyagraha Ashram than Shantiniketan. But such competition and claim must not be interpreted into an assumption of superiority. I am most desirous to keep Satyagraha Ashram veiled from the public. We are there a band of humble unlettered workers knowing our own failings, trying to understand them still further and undoubtedly intent upon finding the truth and wanting to live and die for it. Comparisons between kindred but not identical institutions must never be made. But if a comparison must be made, in spite of

[1] *Vide* Vol. XIII, p. 18.

[2] Father of Rabindranath Tagore

the early rising and the discipline of Satyagraha Ashram, I would vote really and sincerely for Shantiniketan as an elder brother. It is older by far in age and I know it is so also in wisdom. But there is that "but". The inmates of Shantiniketan must beware of the race that the little place in Gujarat is running.

Having said so much of Shantiniketan by way of reparation, I have no time or space left for giving my version of the morning discourse[1] nor must I attempt it. It came from the very depth of my soul. I could not report it myself with the same force. I heard a sister give it in one sentence. It was so true. I wish the unknown friend had never thought of reporting it. The report does not convey the central truth of it.

In Holy Banaras

What is going on in Banaras is graphically described in the following telegram:[2]

> . . . volunteers sentenced twentieth six weeks rigorous for distributing notices inviting volunteers' enlistment. Till now treated simple imprisonment. Second instant imposed labour. Refused. Confined solitary cells, besides insanitation. Starving waterless. . . . Kripalaniji, others, even ordinary criminals protest hunger strike since third today . . . position anxious.

In Andhra

The reader will peruse with profit a note prepared by Mr. Narsinha Rao regarding the preparation in Andhra for civil disobedience. I supplement it with the following from Deshabhakta K. Venkatappayya written on the 2nd instant:[3]

In Poona

Mr. N. C. Kelkar and his courageous band are making headway. The Government will not imprison them. They have now imposed a fine of Rs. 50/- on Mr. Kelkar for picketing. This of course he has refused to pay. If Mr. Kelkar and the others continue to picket in spite of the fines, they must suffer material ruin. I hope they will all stand that test. To put up with loss of property is as necessary as loss of life for the national uplift.

In the Sabarmati Jail

As if there was design in the move, an echo of the Karachi Jail comes now from Sabarmati Jail. Jairamdas [Daulatram] will

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Satyagraha Ashram, Ahmedabad", 26-1-1922.

[2] Only excerpts reproduced here

[3] The letter, not reproduced here, described non-co-operators' activities at Guntur and Nellore.

not salaam in the degrading manner prescribed, he will not submit to the search. He is, therefore, confined to a solitary cell, he is deprived of light and sandals. It is said that he will have still further penalties imposed on him, if he does not yield. He may be put in irons and kept standing for three days. Such penalty has been paid before now by our forefathers, it has been paid in all times and in many lands. I hope that God will give strength to the prisoners who have challenged the authorities and that they will not surrender though they should have to die.

Young India, 9-2-1922

150. THE ONLY ISSUE

It was not without deep thought and prayer that I wrote the letter to His Excellency the Viceroy. It is not a threat because every word in it is meant. It is a heartfelt prayer to the tyrant to desist from evil. Lord Reading is not the tyrant. The system of which he is himself an unconscious and helpless victim is the tyrant. But every system becomes embodied in a person. Today it is personified in Lord Reading, no matter how unconscious he is of it. I have invited him in all humility seriously to consider the position and ask himself whether the official lawlessness can in any case be justified. Let him turn to the week's summary[1] to which the old heading "In Cold Blood" is restored. It is all true if the witnesses are not all liars. Should these things be?

But what of defiance of authority? Must defiance (non-violent at least) indeed of authority be met by barbarous and wicked abuse of it?

If the Viceroy cannot or will not see such an incredibly simple issue must India sit still? Defensive civil disobedience *must* continue at any cost. If the whole of India were to say that even peaceful public meetings may not be held without permission, that peaceful volunteer associations may not be formed without permission, and that newspapers cannot be published without permission, that prohibition cannot be accepted. For a man may not be expected to ask for another's leave to breathe or eat or drink. The three things I have mentioned are the breath, the food and the drink of public life.

Young India, 9-2-1922

[1] Of accounts of atrocities committed by the police published in *Young India*, 9-2-1922

151. IN A TANGLE

Sir Henry Wheeler has given us an accurate expression for describing the position of the Bengal Government and for that matter even the Government of India. He considered the debate in the Bengal Legislative Council on the resolution calling upon the Government to cancel all the repressive notices and to discharge all the prisoners convicted under them "a hopeless unreality". For him who perhaps does not know what is going on in Bengal except what his subordinates choose to tell him, the debate may be "a hopless unreality". The fifty Councillors who have first hand knowledge of things as they are, refused to be misled by Sir Henry's oratory. To them, the position taken up by the Bengal Government was "a hopeless unreality". The lawlessness in the country described by Sir Henry Wheeler existed only in his imagination. What was real did not in their estimation need the drastic measures that the Bengal Government had taken. The Councillors knew that such lawlessness as existed in Bengal was disciplined, civil, non-violent and necessitated by the thoughtless action of the authorities. Sir Henry Wheeler failed to drive home to his audience his conviction that Chitta Ranjan Das, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Shyam Sundar Chakravarti and now even Babu Hardayal Nag, the aged President of the Provincial Congress Committee, had any mischievous intention. With the imprisonment of these trusted leaders of the people and many other innocent workers in their minds, the terrifying description given by Sir Henry Wheeler appeared to the members as unreal as it possibly could be and failed to frighten them into rejecting the resolution. The Councillors deserve congratulations for the courageous stand they took up for freedom of opinion, because the lawlessness that Sir Henry Wheeler complained of amounts to no more than insistence in defiance of prohibitory orders upon the exercise of the right of free speech and free association.

Forcible dispersal of peaceful meetings, search and seizure of Congress and Khilafat papers and assaults upon the public were such a grim reality with the Councillors that they had no choice left to them but to support the resolution. It is worthy of note that Sir Henry Wheeler's amendment was by no means of an uncompromising nature. He offered a non-official committee to go into the matter, but the Councillors very properly rejected the compromise. They were not prepared to have the evidence of their own senses

disputed by any committee. The Bengal Government must now find itself in a tangle. If it releases the innocent prisoners and recalls its precious notices, the Congress and Khilafat organizations must go on with redoubled vigour. If it refuses to carry out the resolution, it must forfeit the support of the Moderates to a large extent. Of course, it can live without that support, as it has done all these long years. But it must know that a new era has dawned upon India. The people are no longer amenable to repression. They are becoming increasingly conscious of their strength. They are becoming increasingly inured to sufferings. No government in the world can possibly repress into submission a people strong and willing enough to suffer.

What is true of Bengal is true of Bihar. The Bihar Council also has spoken in no uncertain terms. The Council of the United Provinces has accepted a compromise, but even there the Government has really no case. It has become difficult for me in spite of doubling the size of *Young India* to quote all the reports of terrible repression received from almost every part of India. It is not now mere imprisonment. It is shameful disregard and equally shameful distortion even of repressive news.

Sir Henry Wheeler has given us also another good expression —"tyranny of words and phrases". He would not be tyrannized by the word "repression". He says every law is repressive and that the public should not be frightened by the word but that they should look at the reality. Let us then face the reality and go behind the tyranny of the phrase "Law and Order". Sir Hormusji Wadia eloquently reminded the Malaviya Conference that many a dark deed was done in the time of the Bourbons in France and elsewhere in the sacred name of "Law and Order". If we would get rid of the magic spell of those two words, we would find that lives and property of the people of India have been rendered unsafe by the acts of the administrators of "Law and Order". It is a sign of the times that the people, even Councillors, refuse to live under the "tyranny of words and phrases" and be deceived by the hopeless unreality of the Government's position. Non-co-operation is a strong solvent and we shall soon find that both the Government and the people will have to come to grips with hopeful realities and get out of the maze of hopeless unrealities in which both have hitherto lived.

Young India, 9-2-1922

152. VIOLENCE IN THE CAMP

Doctors Rajan and Shastry, two of the best workers of Madras, have been arrested together with two others evidently in the cause of, shall I say, intemperance. The Madras Government have discovered a method of breaking up Congress and Khilafat organizations without resort to the Criminal Law Amendment Act and the Seditious Meetings Act. They will do better than Bengal and the United Provinces. They will avoid the reproach of having enforced the Acts which have become the object of criticism in the country. And I hear that in Madras, at any rate, it is the redoubtable Sir Thyagaraj Chetty more than Lord Willingdon who is bent upon breaking up these organizations. For non-co-operators, who are against measures and not men, it is one and the same thing whether the actor is an Indian or an Englishman. It is my certain conviction that Englishmen who serve under Swaraj Government will be as good as Indians. And we are sorrowful witnesses of the fact that some of our countrymen can, under the existing system, become just as efficient administrators of a vicious system as Englishmen. We have, therefore, to fight the system irrespective of men. We, who have been victims for four generations of dual law, one for Englishmen and another for ourselves, must not be guilty of it ourselves. Let Madras, therefore, be tried and purified even under Sir Thyagaraj Chetty's rule.

If we are true to ourselves, we shall be able effectively to deal with all our opponents, whether they be our own countrymen or Englishmen. But a letter received from Dr. Rajan four days before his arrest emphasizes the warning given to us by recent happenings that we have to beware more of ourselves than of our opponents. Here is his letter evidently not written for publication nor for privilege. It is both a confession and a criticism. Writes Dr. Rajan:

> One of your young friends, G. V. Kripanidhi by name, wrote the editorial in the *Swarajya* on the 15th instant entitled "To Our Shame" regarding the hartal troubles in Madras. Mr. Prakasam was absent, away at Bombay. The day prior to the hartal I was able to prevail on the organizers that the volunteers should be made to do police duty and protect those that opened their shops and that went to the Prince's visit. But later, Mr. Prakasam insisted that they must remain indoors. There was bitter comment against that article and I felt it my duty to support the leading article, a copy of which I send for your perusal.

Just two days ago, Mr. Singaravelu Chettiar, President Madras District Congress Council, held a public meeting on the Madras beach. The first resolution congratulated the citizens of Madras on their successful hartal and the second resolution condemned the excesses committed that day. Mr. Prakasam did not agree with your criticism of my letter to you and said in his speech that my letter did not give you sufficient data to draw the conclusions you have drawn. I wired to Mr. Singaravelu not to have this ugly meeting but evidently no notice seems to have been taken of it. It is indeed a great pity that I am not strong enough to induce our non-co-operators to see their mistakes, while they are gloating over their success that the public of Madras have redeemed the pledge given to you regarding the hartal. Yet the grim fact remains that violence and undue coercion have made the hartal a failure for non-violent non-co-operation. Whilst this struggle for non-violence exists against the violence of our own men, one may well hesitate to take a single step forward in civil resistance. I have often written in the local press about the weakness of our party in the fact that some of our non-co-operators do not have the same faith in non-violence as they should have.

Salem has been the target of attack by the local Government this week. Almost all the workers, speakers, volunteers, including myself and Ramaswamy Naiker, have been served with 144 asking us not to hold any public meeting or advocate abstention from drink. Civil disobedience (individual) has been started, and already three non-co-operating *vakils* and fifteen others have disobeyed and are in jail. Yesterday three more disobeyed the order and twelve have been arrested. The Chairman of the Municipality and four practising *vakils* have been served with notices under 144 preventing them from addressing any meeting. Today at Madura 17 volunteers have been arrested for picketing. So far there has been no violence anywhere. I have not yet offered disobedience but I intend doing so during the course of the week or after 1st February.

I am rather taken aback at my own change—from a revolutionary of the India House of 1908 to the non-violent non-co-operator of 1922. It is indeed a change but this change of heart, the peace of suffering, the perfect unconcern of the mind with which it is faced, seem well nigh impossible but for living examples. Years ago I would have fumed and fretted against any restraining orders, I would have vowed vengeance against the policeman that served the notice, against the official that issued the illegal and mad order, but today I have not got any ill will against them, but would be thanking the official for having given one more proof, feeble as it is, to the many glaring instances of the utter disregard of truth and righteousness of the present administrative machinery which has made monsters of mild and good men, and I have

nothing but pity for the erring official. Even for his sake suffering seems to be the only remedy open to us at this juncture.

Hostile papers make capital out of your writing in the *Navajivan* that "you are at sea" with regard to swaraj. It has given room to misconceptions. It may be that the Associated Press has advantageously extracted only portions of it. It strikes me as if you are unduly pessimistic. I do not know whether you felt exactly on the verge of hopelessness about non-violence and untouchability. Progress in our present condition is possible only under limitations and till the restricting limitations are shattered no robust growth is possible. Swaraj will break our limitations and give us sufficient light and air. Any scheme of swaraj must aim at breaking these barriers of progress, and it is a question which should come first. There is no use letting more of our countrymen getting Europeanized and ridicule the charkha as the wonderful Madras ministry has done. The national deterioration must stop. I think it would be better if you could reproduce the whole of your article of the *Navajivan* in *Young India* with any comment you think necessary thereon. I have unnecessarily made this letter lengthy. Kindly excuse trouble.

I need not remark now upon the fact that nowadays people are being singled out for imprisonment for the sake of their non-violence if they are also influential. I reproduce the letter for the warning it contains. There is little doubt that there are some among us who do not implicitly believe in non-violence even while they are under the pledge, i.e., they do not mind the assistance of those who would do violence. They seem to believe that violence can run parallel to non-violence and the two together accelerate the progress of the country towards its goal. Such an attitude besides being hypocritical is positively against the country's interest. Two *opposite* forces may run parallel but they *cannot both go in the same direction*! If non-violence was a camouflage or a preparation for violence, an accidental or intended outbreak of it might be by way of trial a great gain even during the pendency of so-called non-violence. But that is not India's religious battle. God is witness above and He is just enough to chastise every double dealing. Our present belief is that India cannot gain anything by violence and must gain her three ends by non-violence alone unsupported by violence. If therefore we will win, there must be on the part of non-co-operators an unequivocal and emphatic mental and vocal condemnation of every act of violence done out of sympathy for their cause. Let those who do not believe in non-violence or believe in both running together form a party of their own and fight out the issue. That would make a non-co-operator's task difficult but not so difficult as when he has to fight an enemy

in his own camp. His system must be kept pure. Any impurity from within will be an organic disease and may prove fatal. No attack from without can ever prove fatal. The first and indeed the only condition of success therefore is that we must be true to ourselves.

The confession, therefore, that Dr. Rajan has made is an invigorating process. It strengthens him and the cause for which he stands. Non-co-operation is a vicious and corrupt doctrine, truly an "ugly" word, if it does not mean down-right self-purification. Stubborn and implacable resistance against internal corruption is enough resistance against the Government. As soon as the process of self-purification is complete, we shall miss the system we appear to be fighting.

There is nothing in the *capital* that is being made out of my writing in the *Navajivan* referred to by Dr. Rajan. I observe that the *Swarajya* has already published a fair translation of the whole article which was written after careful thought. It explains itself.

Young India, 9-2-1922

153. NOTE ON TERMS OF AGREEMENT WITH COMMITTEE[1]

[*February 9, 1922*]

1. As regards Mass Civil Disobedience,

   Mr. Gandhi intends advising the W.C.[2] to stop it till 31st December 1922.

2. As regards other items,

   Mr. Gandhi to advise the W.C. to restrict picketing of liquor and cloth-shops to such means as are devoid of provocation or defiance of law, and in particular

   (1) to confine it to places where atmosphere of perfect non-violence is maintained;

   (2) to employ as agents only men of responsibility and beyond a certain mature age;

   (3) motive of picketing to be not provocation or defiance of law, but promotion of the merit of the question itself.

[1] The Committee appointed by the Leaders' Conference of January 14 and 15, 1922. In *The Story of My Life*, Vol. I, p. 555, Jayakar writes in his entry for February 9, 1922 : " . . . I noted down certain terms on which he [Gandhiji] and the Committee had agreed and I gave those terms to him. He is as honest as usual and admitted them . . . "

[2] Working Committee

This is not necessarily to be under the same time limit, as this will be implied in the resolution on M.C.D.[1]

3. Volunteers,

not to be listed for Mass Civil Disobedience, nor for defying the law, but for carrying on the activities of social, moral and economic reform.

4. Preparatory activities of an offensive, hostile or provocative character to be suspended pending R.T.C.

5. The terms offered at the Representative Conference in Bombay to remain open.

Gandhiji says cls. 4 & 5 are not necessary, as they are implied in 1-3, but if it is necessary at any time for a R.T.C. to give these as assurances, the same will be given.

From a photostat: S.N. 7909

154. MY NOTE

Oppression in Balia

I reproduce below the vivid description of the oppression now going on in Balia which Chi. Devdas Gandhi has given.[2] Balia is one of the poorer districts of the United Provinces. The people there are energetic, simple-minded and trusting. They are patriotic. I often planned to go there, but I have not been able to do so. Since the district is on the Bihar border, its people are more like the Biharis. I can picture to myself the oppression they suffer. My heart bleeds when I think of it. I feel unhappy that I could not go there. If I survive the anguish which I feel now, I hope to go on a pilgrimage to Balia. May this hope of mine comfort the people of Balia. The sacrifices of towns like Balia will surely liberate this country. May God grant the people there still greater strength to bear suffering, and may the example of Balia serve to make Gujarat more eager to suffer!

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-2-1922

[1] This is in Gandhiji's hand.

[2] In a letter to Gandhiji, which is not translated here

155. TELEGRAM TO DEVDAS GANDHI

BOMBAY,
February 9, 1922

DEVDAS GANDHI
CONGRESS OFFICE
GORAKHPUR

YOUR WIRE. SEND FULL ACCURATE REPORTS[1]. KEEP PEOPLE NON-VIOLENT. GET ALL INFORMATION. TELL WORKERS AM DEEPLY GRIEVED. KEEP CALM. GOD WILL BLESS YOU. RETURNING BARDOLI TONIGHT.

BAPU

From a photostat : S.N. 7898

156. NOTE ON CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE IN GUNTUR[2]

[Before *February 10, 1922*]

If Andhra stops civil disobedience, I shall be glad. But if it cannot stop, I shall not mind it provided of course that complete control is attained over forces of violence and all conditions are fulfilled.

M. K. GANDHI

Andhra Government Records

[1] About the Chauri Chaura incidents

[2] Found in the source under the following description: "The note in pencil sent by Mahatma Gandhi to the President of the Guntur District Congress Committee through Sri B. Pattabhi Sitaramayyah regarding the no-tax campaign in the Guntur District". The report is dated February 10, 1922.

157. SPEECH TO CONGRESS WORKERS, BARDOLI[1]

[*February 10, 1922*][2]

I regard those who have assembled here as some of the best workers in the country. In fact, I can see the condition of India at the present time truly reflected by this small assembly. What I have heard now confirms me in the belief that most of those who are present here have failed to understand the message of non-violence. This convinces me that the country at large has not at all accepted the teaching of non-violence. I must, therefore, immediately stop the movement for civil disobedience.

Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi, pp. 226-7

158. WORKING COMMITTEE'S RESOLUTIONS AT BARDOLI[3]

[*February 12, 1922*]

The working Committee of the Congress met at Bardoli on the 11th and 12th instant and passed the following resolutions:

1. The Working Committee deplores the inhuman conduct of the mob at Chauri Chaura in having brutally murdered constables and wantonly burnt the Police *Thana* and tenders its sympathy to the families of the bereaved.

2. In view of Nature's repeated warnings, every time mass civil disobedience has been imminent some popular violent outburst has taken place indicating that the atmosphere in the country is not non-violent enough for mass disobedience, the latest instance being the tragic and terrible events at Chauri

[1] The source says: " . . . Mahatmaji summoned . . . the whole body of workers, and all those who were present at Bardoli today, to discuss with him the propriety or otherwise of starting civil disobedience in the face of the terrible happening at Chauri Chaura. He asked for the opinion of everyone present . . . almost everyone, young and old, declared . . . that if Mahatmaji retreated after throwing out a challenge to Lord Reading in the manner he had done by his rejoinder to the Government *communique*, the whole country would be disgraced before the world. Only three persons dissented from this view . . . "

[2] From the source

[3] Presumably drafted by Gandhiji. These resolutions were passed by the Working Committee, which met at Bardoli on February 11 and 12, and were subsequently adopted by the A.I.C.C. on February 25; *vide* "Resolution at A.I.C.C. Meeting, Delhi", 25-2-1922, and *Young India*, 2-3-1922.

Chaura near Gorakhpur, the Working Committee of the Congress resolves that mass civil disobedience contemplated at Bardoli and elsewhere be suspended and instructs the local Congress Committees forthwith to advise the cultivators to pay the land revenue and other taxes due to the Government and whose payment might have been suspended in anticipation of mass civil disobedience, and instructs them to suspend every other preparatory activity of an offensive nature.

3. The suspension of mass civil disobedience shall be continued till the atmosphere is so non-violent as to ensure the non-repetition of popular atrocities such as at Gorakhpur or hooliganism such as at Bombay and Madras respectively on 17th November 1921 and 13th January last.

4. In order to promote a peaceful atmosphere, the Working Committee advises, till further instructions, all Congress organizations to stop activities specially designed to court arrest and imprisonment, save normal Congress activities including voluntary hartals wherever an absolutely peaceful atmosphere can be assured and for that end all picketing shall be stopped save for the *bona-fide* and peaceful purpose of warning the visitors to liquor shops against the evils of drinking, such picketing to be controlled by persons of known good character and specially selected by the Congress Committees concerned.

5. The Working Committee advises, till further instructions, the stoppage of all volunteer processions and public meetings merely for the purpose of defiance of the notifications regarding such meetings. This, however, shall not interfere with the private meetings of the Congress and other Committees or public meetings which are required for the conduct of the normal activities of the Congress.

6. Complaints having been brought to the notice of the Working Committee that ryots are not paying rents to the zemindars, the Working Committee advises Congress workers and organizations to inform the ryots that such withholding of rents is contrary to the resolutions of the Congress and that it is injurious to the best interests of the country.

7. The Working Committee assures the zemindars that the Congress movement is in no way intended to attack their legal rights, and that even where the ryots have grievances, the Committee's desire is that redress should be sought by mutual consultations and by the usual recourse to arbitrations.

8. Complaints having been brought to the notice of the Working Committee that in the formation of Volunteer Corps great

laxity prevails in the selection and that insistence is not laid on the full use of hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar, and on the full observance by Hindus of the rule as to the removal of untouchability, nor is care being taken to ascertain that the candidates believe fully in the observance of non-violence in intent, word and deed, in terms of the Congress resolution, the Working Committee calls upon all Congress organizations to revise their lists and remove from them the names of all such volunteers as do not strictly conform to the requirements of the pledge.

9. The Working Committee is of opinion that unless Congressmen carry out to the full the Congress constitution and the resolutions from time to time issued by the Working Committee, it is not possible to achieve its objects expeditiously or at all.

10. The foregoing resolutions will have effect only pending the meeting to be specially convened of the All-India Congress Committee and thereafter subject to confirmation by it, the Secretary to call such meeting as early as possible after consultation with Hakim Ajmal Khan.[1]

THE NEW PROGRAMME

Whereas the Gorakhpur tragedy is a powerful proof of the fact that the mass mind has not yet fully realized the necessity of non-violence as an integral, active, and chief part of mass civil disobedience, and whereas the reported indiscriminate acceptance of persons as volunteers in contravention of the Congress instructions betrays want of appreciation of the vital part of satyagraha, and whereas in the opinion of the Working Committee, the delay in the attainment of the national aim is solely due to the weak and incomplete execution, in practice, of the constitution of the Congress and with a view to perfecting the internal organization, the Working Committee advises all Congress organizations to be engaged in the following activities:

1. To enlist at least one crore of members of the Congress.

Note (*i*): Since peace (non-violence) and legitimateness (truth)[2] are the essence of the Congress creed, no person should be enlisted who does not believe in non-violence and truth[3] as indispensable for the attainment of swaraj. The creed of the Con-

[1] In the modified version passed by the A.I.C.C., these paragraphs form Resolution I and those that follow appear as Resolution III and have been assigned to February 12; *vide Young India*, 2-3-1922.

[2] Here the A.I.C.C. resolution has: "Since peaceful and legitimate means".

[3] The A.I.C.C. resolution has "believe in such means".

gress must, therefore, be carefully explained to each person who is appealed to, to join the Congress.

Note (*ii*): The workers should note that no one who does not pay the annual subscription can be regarded as a qualified Congressman. All the old members are, therefore, to be advised to re-register their names.

2. To popularize the spinning-wheel and organize the manufacture of hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar.[1]

Note: To this end all workers and office-bearers should be dressed in khaddar, and it is recommended that with a view to encourage others they should themselves learn hand-spinning.

3. To organize national schools.

Note: No picketing of Government schools should be resorted to; but reliance should be placed upon the superiority of national schools in all vital matters to[2] command attendance.

4. To organize the depressed classes for a better life, to improve their social, mental and moral condition, to induce them to send their children to national schools, and to provide for them the ordinary facilities which other citizens enjoy.

Note: Whilst, therefore, where the prejudice against the untouchables is still strong separate schools and separate wells must be maintained out of Congress funds, every effort should be made to draw such children to national schools and to persuade the people to allow the untouchables to use the common wells.

5. To organize the temperance campaign amongst the people addicted to the drink habit by house-to-house visits and to rely more upon appeal to the drinker in his home than upon picketing.

6. To organize village and town *panchayats* for the private settlement of all disputes, reliance being placed solely upon the force of public opinion and the truthfulness of panchayat decision to ensure obedience to them.

Note: In order to avoid even the appearance of coercion, no social boycott should be resorted to against those who will not obey the *panchayat's* decisions.

7. In order to promote and emphasize unity among all classes and races and mutual goodwill, the establishment of which is the aim of the movement of non-co-operation, to organize a

[1] Here the A.I.C.C. resolution adds: "and popularize its use by house-to-house visits".

[2] Here the A.I.C.C. resolution has: "to draw students from government and aided schools".

social service department that will render help to all, irrespective of political[1] differences, in times of illness or accident.

Note: A non-co-operator, whilst firmly adhering to his creed, will deem it a privilege to render personal service, in case of illness or accident, to every person whether English or Indian.

8. To continue the Tilak Memorial Swaraj Fund[2] and to call upon every Congressman or Congress sympathizer to pay at least one hundredth part of his annual income for the year 1921. Every province to send every month 25 per cent of its income from the Tilak Memorial Fund to the All-India Congress Committee.

9. The above resolutions shall be brought before the forthcoming session of the All-India Congress Committee for revision, if necessary.

10. In the opinion of the Working Committee a project is necessary for the purpose of finding employment for those who may give up Government service and to that end the Committee appoints Messrs Mian Mahomed Haji Jan Mahomed Chhotani, Jamnalal Bajaj and V. J. Patel to draw up a scheme for consideration by the said[3] special meeting of the All-India Congress Committee.[4]

Young India, 16-2-1922

159. *CONDITIONS FOR SWARAJ*

We have discussed the conditions for swaraj several times before now. But, as long as we have not learnt to observe them, we must continue to think about them and tell ourselves that there can be no swaraj till then. If we do this, we shall escape many dangers. We shall then get angry only with ourselves and will refrain from doing wrong things.

The Congress has pointed out these conditions many times in different ways and has at last made them obligatory on those who enlist themselves as volunteers. The result is that we do not get volunteers in sufficient numbers now, and even those who come forward do not observe the conditions fully.

[1] This word is dropped in the A.I.C.C. resolution.

[2] *Vide* Vol XIX, pp. 188-9.

[3] The A.I.C.C. resolution has "next".

[4] This paragraph forms Resolution II in the modified version passed by the A.I.C.C. and, along with Resolution I, has been assigned to February 11.

If a patient does not take the medicine in the way prescribed by the *vaid*[1], the fault is his, not the *vaid's*. Similarly, if we do not observe the conditions for swaraj, we ourselves are to blame.

At the moment, however, we need not go into the question of who is to blame. We are concerned only with how we may win swaraj. Just as a patient will not recover without taking the right medicine, so also swaraj cannot be won without observing the necessary conditions. Swaraj cannot be won merely by people becoming volunteers. It will be won only by volunteers observing the conditions laid down for them. If recruits are required to have a minimum height of five feet, any pigmies of four feet who manage to get in will certainly not help to win the battle but will become a burden, and may possibly be the cause of their side being defeated. Similarly, if some volunteers inclined to violence join those who observe the condition of non-violence, they can only do harm. When enlistment as volunteers is open only to those who wear nothing but hand-spun khadi at home and outside and on all occasions, how can persons who wear khadi containing mill-made warp, or who wear pure khadi only at the time of enrolment and while on duty as volunteers, help to win swaraj? These persons resort to deception right from the start. The condition about khadi, which should seem easy, is felt to be difficult. What involves the minimum of expense is looked upon, it seems, as very expensive.

Perhaps people do not believe that swaraj can be won through khadi. If that is so, they should not have voted in favour of khadi at the Congress and at the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee. If we are not serious even about what we do, we shall not advance any distance worth speaking of. The work we have done will also be wasted.

If we are demanding swaraj for the sake of the poorest of the poor and the lowest of the low, for the sake of victims of famines and for all those who live by begging, if we wish to banish hunger from the country, then we shall find that we cannot do without hand-spun khadi, for by no other means can we provide the homes of such people with the necessaries of life.

The same about untouchability. Anyone who believes that untouchability is a part of Hinduism has no right to become a non-co-operator. This Government has made a science of social distance. Go where we will, we are treated as untouchables. We are treated as fit only to receive kicks and abuses, as fit to be kept

[1] Physician practising the Ayurvedic system of medicine

at a distance. Our right place is in jail. All these are signs of our being treated as untouchables. We mark all of them in our behaviour towards the *Dheds* and the *Bhangis*. What right, then, do we have to swaraj as conceived by the Congress, and how can we get ourselves enrolled as Congress volunteers? A Hindu who thinks that untouchability is part of his dharma should see in a moment that he has no right at all to remain a non-co-operator. And, if all those who regard themselves as Hindus are not sincerely ready to give up untouchability, I at any rate will declare, though I may be in a minority of one, that there can be no swaraj, that Hinduism will perish, unless this sinful practice is abolished. To cling to the sin of untouchability as a part of dharma and at the same time to hope to preserve Hinduism, protect the cow, practise non-violence and have equal regard for all, —I believe all this to be impossible. Just as crops will not ripen without sunshine, so we shall certainly not reap the harvest of swaraj till the darkness of untouchability has vanished.

There can be no swaraj without fearlessness. And yet the Hindus fear the Muslims and the latter fear the former. The Parsis and the Christians fear them both. How, then, can we get swaraj? How can anyone who has not shed all fear, that is to say, does not look upon all Indians as his brothers and sisters, be considered as a lover of swaraj? How is he fit to join the Volunteer Corps?

Hence, I would certainly tell the Gujaratis at any rate that, if they wish to have swaraj at an early date, they ought to fulfil all the conditions explained above. No matter if they are practising lawyers, title-holders, or members of any council, if they observe these conditions they can join the Volunteer Corps. On the other hand, if a person has given up practice, relinquished a title, left a Government school or resigned from a council but he does not observe even one of these conditions, then he is not a swarajist. He cannot join the Volunteer Corps and he is not fit to go to jail. His going to jail or sacrificing his life will not bring swaraj. It may happen that his going to jail may help to end this Government; in that case, however, it will be replaced by a government worse than this.

But I cannot conceive of such a government. I, therefore, believe that we shall not get swaraj by going to jail if we do not observe the conditions explained above. It is true that by going to jail and by facing beatings, we get certain kind of fearlessness, but swaraj cannot be won by fearlessness only. Just as one gains *moksha*[1]

[1] Deliverance from phenomenal existence

if one has fearlessness along with knowledge and discrimination, so also swaraj can be won only if, in addition to being fearless, we understand and observe the conditions for swaraj. Those who killed Lachhman Singh[1] and his associates were men who feared nothing. But no one regards them as swarajists. We shall not win swaraj by collecting together such desperadoes. And even if we can imagine for a moment that it can be won, then it will be a government by desperadoes, from which the true non-co-operator will run miles away.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-2-1922

160. GOVERNMENT'S REPLY

The Government's reply[2] to our offer[3] of peace will pain the reader. Nowhere is there any sign of repentance or an admission of error. From the beginning to the end, the Government claims itself to be innocent and attempts to prove the non-co-operators to be the guilty party.

I thought of two explanations after reading that reply. Either they have deliberately told lies in it or those who drafted the reply have so much faith in the officials that they are not at all prepared to believe that the latter can do any wrong. I have rejected the first explanation out of regard for human nature at any rate, and accepted the second.

Both attitudes are terrible. One must guard against either mistake—telling lies and doing wrong deliberately, or being blind to one's errors and continuing to be under the delusion that one is entirely innocent.

I believe the Government's error is of the latter type, for I believe that man errs unintentionally more often than otherwise. If non-co-operators do not readily see their errors, why should we not believe the same to be true about the Government? Our duty is to use a microscope to see our faults and employ a telescope to observe those of others, the error barely visible even so. The man or woman or the society that adopts this principle will always be happy. One who looks upon his own defects as mountain-huge will have very little time to point out the faults of others. A person will then feel miserable for his own

[1] *Vide* Vol. XIX, pp. 421-5.

[2] *Vide* Appendix II.

[3] *Vide* "Letter to Viceroy", 1-2-1922.

mistake and, since he does not, by his very nature, wish to be unhappy, we will soon remove his mountain-like defects.

I wish to follow this same rule and to use a telescope to see the Government's mistakes. The reader should keep in mind one characteristic of the telescope. It shows us only distant objects, and those too as dim and small images; objects close at hand, it does not allow to be seen at all. I know that I have always overlooked the Government's minor mistakes. But now the Government has crossed the limit. In its reply, it has sought to make out some of its wrong actions as prompted by its virtues and has ignored those which could not possibly be so represented. For example, about the notices it has issued banning meetings and speeches, it says that the ban had to be imposed only because of the mischievous activities of the non-co-operators. The truth, however, is that the Government has been able to offer no evidence which would justify this ban. Even so, it was possible to advance an argument in support of it and, therefore, a wrong action was represented as good. But how can seizure of property, beating up of people, burning of khadi and raids on Congress offices at night be defended? No matter what crimes people commit, how can the Government's officials unlawfully seize property or beat up people? The Government, therefore, has altogether ignored this charge. A similar policy of exaggeration or silence has been adopted in the letter in regard to other serious matters too. I do not wish to take the readers' time by analysing the reply from this point of view. A reply was of course expected, and I even knew that it would contain nothing important. But I was certainly not prepared for the shamelessness that I find in the actual reply. I had thought that it would contain something to conciliate the Moderates. But they also have been ignored and, for the non-co-operators, the position remains the same as before. For thinking people can there be any evidence more convincing than this reply of the Government's attitude of regarding us as untouchables?

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 12-2-1922

161. GORAKHPUR'S CRIME

Gorakhpur is most probably the biggest district in the country. Its inhabitants are a spirited people. From the news which has appeared in papers, it seems that they have showed their spirit in the wrong way. They set fire to a police station,[1] killed 21 innocent policemen and burned their bodies; a young son of a sub-inspector was also among the killed. According to newspaper reports, people went to disperse a Friday market which was being held there. At first a few men went to the spot, but they were turned back. Thereupon a big crowd went there! This included some volunteers too.

I and other thoughtful non-co-operators will have to hang our head in shame for this incident. There is other news also which raises doubts in our minds about peace being preserved.

This augurs ill for the beginning which Bardoli was to make. The two methods—of peace and violence—cannot be employed at the same time. If the people want to employ violence, those employing peaceful methods will have to chalk out another path for themselves. The votaries of peace will have to non-co-operate both with this Government which worships violence and those among the people who do the same.

If the people of Gorakhpur district had no interest in the movement, we shall have to admit that the non-co-operators have had much less effect than we thought they had. On every important occasion, some such obstacles block our path. When our people die, my heart does not beat fast or, if it does, I can control it. When, however, even one co-operator is killed, I am humiliated and feel apprehensive about our progress. Everyone who believes exclusively in the method of peace ought to feel as I do.

I am writing this on my way to Bombay.[2] I am proceeding there on the invitation of *Bharatbhushan* Pandit Malaviya. The Working Committee meeting convened in Bardoli will take place on Saturday[3]. The reader will have this article in his hands on Sunday. As I do not wish to take upon myself the responsibility for suspending mass civil disobedience, I want to consult the Working Committee.

[1] On February 4, 1922

[2] February 8, 1922; *vide* "Letter to Dr. M. S. Kelkar", 8-2-1922.

[3] February 11, 1922

I always stand firm in my dharma. It can be tested only at such times. As long as I see the spirit of non-violence spreading, I would be ready to run many risks; when, however, I see that my movement is being exploited by others, I simply cannot take even one step further.

I am awaiting more news from Gorakhpur. I place my thoughts before readers because I want every one of them to help me. This is a new kind of struggle. Those who have faith in methods of peace must search their hearts. They will have to devote themselves exclusively to propagating non-violence. This struggle is intended not to spread hatred but to end it. It is not intended to create barriers between people but to bring them together. It is not one in which we may use a combination of means, but is one in which we have to use discrimination and distinguish between right and wrong.

I am certainly the one most responsible for the crime of the people of Gorakhpur district, but every genuine non-co-operator is also responsible for it. All of us should be in mourning for it. But the matter can be further discussed only when we have more details. May God save the honour of India and of non-co-operators.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 12-2-1922

162. MY NOTES

WHY "FAITHFUL SERVANT"

A gentleman writes to say:

> You have signed your letter to His Excellency the Viceroy as "Your faithful servant and friend". I hope the word "servant" crept in through oversight and that you yourself did not write it.

I hope that this gentleman will not be displeased to know that I deliberately used the word "servant". I look upon His Excellency the Viceroy as a nobleman holding a high office and do not wish to give up the language of civilized usage in addressing him. Non-co-operation does not imply uncivilized behaviour. Non-violent non-co-operation means civilized non-co-operation. An uncivilized person has no right to resort to non-co-operation. Moreover, we should go out of our way to be courteous to those against whom we employ non-co-operation, lest they take offence and feel that we bear a personal grudge against them. This is what

the weapon of non-violent non-co-operation means. As a non-co-operator, therefore, I was bound to use civilized language in my letter to the Viceroy. I have also deliberately used the word "friend" along with the word "servant". By using this word, I have indicated that, although I am a servant, I am not a slave. One can be an enemy though one may use the word "servant". By using the word "friend", I have indicated that it is a religious principle with me not to look upon anyone as an enemy. I have also, by using it, refused to hold myself inferior to the British and conveyed my intention of corresponding with them only on terms of equality. I indicated my faith in non-violence by using the word "faithful" and assured him that there was no danger of my becoming hostile to him or to his people. In this way, although the words used with my signature are part of civilized usage, they have been used intentionally and serve some purpose.

"Do Not Know How to Do It"

A friend writes with reference to the boycott of a reception to the Prince of Wales at some place:[1]

The description is very apt. This is no way of preserving peace. We ourselves are now responsible for hindering our progress. Just as a person who overeats cannot help suffering from indigestion, similarly one who has a biting tongue cannot prevent violence from breaking out. A glutton does not welcome indigestion; similarly, the man with a sharp tongue may not approve of violence. Nevertheless, if both these persons do not know where to stop or do not keep within limits, the results will be other than what they want. The reason why the spirit of violence still lurks in some places is that we have not yet taken measures to overcome it. Thought is reflected in words and words in their turn inevitably lead to action. If we do not control thought and restrain speech, it is useless to attempt to prevent their inevitable result. It is for this reason that it had to be stated clearly in the Congress resolution this time that violence should be eschewed even from thought; Maulana Bari Saheb, for instance, says in a letter of his that he does not permit violence to affect him even in his thoughts. It is not enough to say that such are the orders of the Congress or that Gandhi has said so. We shall readily find

[1] The passage is not translated here. The correspondent had complained that public speakers who pleaded with people to preserve peace were undoubtedly sincere in their desire but did not know the right language to persuade them to do so.

arguments in support of the principle only if we, too, think in the same way.

Moreover, when people wanting to honour the Prince were described as "donkeys" or "monkeys", those who used such terms were clearly guilty of violence in speech; they abused others, showed their anger and violated the pledge which they had taken. They forsook civilized manners. We should never use such terms to describe our rivals or opponents. Our language should always breathe the spirit of peace. To hope that anyone who joins the procession may be divorced by his wife is to wish that he should be punished. What would be the country's plight if, following this advice, the wives of all those who attended the function in the Prince's honour left them? That would be nothing but coercion.

If we desert our partner because he or she does not change his or her views the moment ours change, or does not understand them, that would be an utterly barbarous practice. If it came to prevail, the world could not endure for a single moment. We ought to remain friends with people even when our views differ. Otherwise, what is the meaning of Hindu-Muslim unity? What a great difference there is between the views of a Hindu and those of a Muslim! While one looks upon it as his dharma to face the east when praying, the other faces the west; while the one grows a *shikha* on his head, the other grows a beard! Despite this, Hindus and Muslims respect each other, bear with each other and neither seeks to use force against the other. If, then, Hindus and Muslims have sincerely pledged themselves to act in this manner, how can the non-co-operators of the present day use force against those who co-operate? If, however, the former do use force against the latter, non-co-operating Hindus are bound to fight with non-co-operating Muslims. Hence, I believe genuine Hindu-Muslim unity to be impossible till non-co-operators decide to win over co-operators only by friendliness.

Opposition to "Navajivan"

A lover of *Navajivan* writes from Veraval:[1]

It is difficult to understand the opposition to *Navajivan* and khadi caps in Kathiawar. However, anyone who recalls what Shri Amritlal Thakkar[2] had to put up with in Veraval will not be surprised by the incident described above. I think that the circulation of *Navajivan* in Kathiawar means the spread of good

[1] The letter is not translated here.

[2] 1869-1951; a member of the Servants of India Society and a leading worker in the cause of the depressed classes and aboriginal tribes

thoughts. The khadi cap and the khadi dress signify prosperity for Kathiawar. It would save sixty-five lakhs of rupees if its population of twenty-six lakhs used annually, on an average, cloth worth two and a half rupees and produced khadi of that value. Everyone can figure out for himself how much the economic condition of Kathiawar would improve if this amount continues to accumulate year after year in the homes of the people in Kathiawar. From this calculation, other equally encouraging figures can also be deduced. If we take each family as consisting of five members, its annual income will increase by twelve and a half rupees. When we calculate the average, we know that each individual does not save the exact amount but that the whole community benefits to that extent. This would mean that the poor families of Kathiawar which need money and are obliged to live in straitened circumstances would get the benefit of this saving of sixty-five lakhs; or, it could also be taken to mean that the people of Kathiawar have a pile of sixty-five lakhs of rupees lying unguarded before them and everyone may help himself to as much of it as he can. This, of course, would be civilized looting. Moreover, as the amount would be distributed through the spinning-wheel, the money would reach only the homes of the poor who needed it. That there should be any opposition to khadi which produces such happy results and to *Navajivan* which propagates khadi, non-violence and truth, is a reflection on our times. In Kathiawar, there can be only one answer to such opposition, viz., that all Kathiawaris should start wearing khadi exclusively. If this is done, the Port Commissioner will find it difficult to ban khadi. Again, as the income from *Navajivan* is used only for public purposes, I can even state distinterestedly that, if every literate person starts subscribing to *Navajivan* the ban imposed in Veraval will also have to be lifted. When large numbers start doing a thing, it is almost, if not quite, impossible to stop them even by threatening to shoot them.

About National Schools

A gentleman writes to warn us in regard to national schools and says that no attention is being paid to primary schools. If, he says, nothing further is done after converting these schools into national schools and children go without education, parents will feel disgusted and withdraw their children; they may even leave them again to the kindness of the Government. Of course, there is much truth in this. There is a great difference between grown-up students who know their responsibilities and children under ten years.

Immediate arrangements should be made for the education of children of tender age. In places where civil disobedience is not in progress, people have no reason either for not attending to these matters. In such places, work is but a part of the preparation for civil disobedience, for we shall become fit for it not by public demonstrations but through work. Preparation for civil disobedience means intensifying constructive and productive activities such as popularizing khadi and the spinning-wheel, improving the quality of yarn and increasing its output, increasing the number of weavers, improving the quality of slivers, banishing drink, placing national education on a sound foundation, mixing with untouchables and so on. It is from these that the strength for civil disobedience is derived. Such work should indeed proceed vigorously in places where no civil disobedience is going on. Similarly, the various bodies of the Congress should be strengthened. The work of enrolling members and collecting four annas from each member should be carried on energetically. Congress offices should be established in every town and village and in each of them five office-bearers should be immediately appointed. We shall never be ready for civil disobedience throughout the country if all this work is not attended to.

I hope, therefore, that the provincial committees will issue directions to the volunteers about the work to be done by them.

Gift of Good Health

The gentleman who has drawn our attention to primary schools has also something to say about preserving health. According to him, I have not written enough about the physical benefits of *brahmacharya*[1] and about exercise. The correspondent belongs to Surat. He says that the people of Surat are keen enough but, being weak in body, they cannot come forward to endure imprisonment and such other hardships which satyagrahis have to suffer. How can we expect them to submit to beatings?

The gentleman is right in drawing our attention to this. However, it is difficult to write repeatedly on a subject like *brahmacharya*. I believe, moreover, that it should not be practised merely for the sake of good health. To do so is to pay a rupee for an article worth a pie. I have taken it for granted that anyone who engages himself in promoting the other activities in the swaraj-programme will readily understand the necessity of practising *brahmacharya*.

[1] Literally, "living in the *Brahman*, the Absolute"; in common usage, celibacy, as an essential condition for attaining this state

Nevertheless, the importance of *brahmacharya* cannot be over-emphasized. Not only does a person who does not practise it cease to be a human being, he is not even on a level with the animals. The latter instinctively observe *brahmacharya*. An animal has neither the sensation of taste nor does it enjoy sensual pleasures. It is governed by the limits of its nature. Hence, in often comparing a person who does not practise *brahmacharya* to an animal, we insult the latter. The man who violates the laws of *brahmacharya* ends up by becoming impotent. It is for this reason that we come across, as symbols of our shame, newspaper advertisements in big letters both in English and in Gujarati of medicines supposed to increase one's virility. The fact that they can afford advertisements which take up so much space is itself an indication of our miserable plight. *Brahmacharya* should be a property of man's nature, as it is of the *atman*. The *atman* of anyone who does not practise *brahmacharya* is, so to say, in a state of darkness. One whose *atman* is awakened will never put his body to an extremely unclean use and one which has painful consequences.

Good thoughts, by themselves, make the practice of *brahmacharya* possible and easy. If the reader thinks quietly for a moment in solitude and calls up before his eyes the full picture of the degradation involved in violating the law of *brahmacharya*, will he not feel disgusted? However, when a man yields to base thoughts, he forgets himself, gets intoxicated without taking liquor and, in that unconscious state, takes pleasure in a base activity, forgets the bitter experience which follows the momentary pleasure and is his old self again.

A *brahmachari* cannot possibly be weak. His mind, his body and his soul are at his command. He has no need for brute strength. Many seem to think that a *brahmachari* is a man of such strength. He has indeed unlimited capacity for enduring physical suffering. It can be said of his body that it knows no fatigue. Such *brahmacharis* are rare.

To a *brahmachari* exercise is part of his daily routine. He should have plenty of fresh air. There is hardly any other outside agent which is as much responsible for our remaining weak as impure air. A young man whose occupation does not require physical exertion must have a daily walk of at least two hours by way of exercise. He should walk in a clean and quiet place, at a normal pace, holding his body straight looking towards the ground and his mind at peace. If, while walking, the person cleanses his heart and mind with pure thoughts as his lungs with fresh air, he is sure to become stronger both physically and mentally. A

brahmachari should not be merely a moderate eater but a spare eater. Even though he is active, he gets less exhausted than others and, therefore, he requires the minimum quantity of food. It is necessary for him to eschew spices and sweets altogether. What we describe as rich food should also be avoided. Pulses are poison to those who do brain work. They hardly need eat anything besides wheat, milk, some green vegetables and, if they can afford, a little fruit.

I feel, however, that I have gone beyond the limits I had set for myself. There are many points connected with *brahmacharya* and all these cannot be dealt with in a single note. Even so, I have set down the foregoing views in commenting on the suggestion made by the correspondent from Surat, with the idea that they may be of some value to those brothers and sisters who look upon this movement as a holy one.

"Active" and "Reserved"

The Congress has classified its volunteers into two categories —*Active*[1], which means "working regularly", and *Reserved*[2], which means "in excess of immediate needs". There seems to be some misunderstanding about the meaning of these two terms. Some people seem to believe that active workers are those who make speeches and organize demonstrations, go touring villages and towns, while reserved workers are those who spin.

This is surely a complete misunderstanding of the meaning of the terms. "Active" workers are those volunteers who can give, and do give, all their time to Congress work. "Reserved" workers are those who have specially enlisted themselves as volunteers because the Government treats it as a crime to do so, but who do not really expect to take up active work and will come forward to get arrested in order simply that they might be in jail. In other words, "Reserved" workers continue to earn their living but court imprisonment when that becomes necessary, while "Active" workers devote themselves wholly to Congress work whether or not they are required to court imprisonment. Such workers either have their own means or the Congress may employ them as paid workers if it considers this necessary. They may also go out and make speeches and so on when the occasion demands it. However, so long as these workers are not entrusted with some special duty, they should occupy themselves in spinning, carding and weaving khadi. They must at any rate spin,whether or not they take up the other two

[1] & [2] Gandhiji uses the English terms.

activities. This has been made compulsory in the Delhi resolution[1]. Moreover, spinning and making others spin are the two principal constructive activities laid down by the Congress. Hence, it will be to the benefit of the people if Congress volunteers and leaders acquire proficiency in this work. The organization has to suffer much through volunteers who avoid their responsibilities in these two matters. Thousands lose their earnings because of them. If we have a large number of people who are proficient in this work, we can improve the strength, the fineness and the evenness of the yarn which is produced. But we have only a handful of persons who are wholly devoted to swadeshi, who love spinning and are proficient in it. According to me, therefore, the first duty of the "Active" volunteer is to acquire complete proficiency in spinning and, after doing so, devote all his spare time to this work.

Even if we develop strength to endure any amount of suffering, the gates of swaraj will never open to us if we do not know the key to India's economic freedom and use it. We should learn to suffer with an intelligent purpose. We should know why we should go to jail. As long, therefore, as we have not become honest about swadeshi and have not realized its importance, we should entertain no hope of winning swaraj, we have no right to get it nor the capacity to manage it. The most important item on our programme, I am convinced, is spinning and making others spin.

ABOUT "ANTYAJAS"

What is true about khadi is also true about *Antyajas*. How can we ever get swaraj if untouchability is not abolished? How can we even accept it? We have no right to complain about the Government's treatment of us as long as we hope to lord it over the *Antyajas*. God rewards or punishes us according to our deeds. As man is ignorant and weak, he does justice by forgiving others. As God is omnipotent and omniscient, He does justice by meting out the punishment that one deserves. If we deceive ourselves in this matter, God will see to it that we remain without swaraj. A young man gives us a warning about this, which I give in his own words.[2]

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXI, pp. 411-4.

[2] The passage is not translated here.

From a Poet of Gujarat to the Poet of Asia

Everyone knows that poet Nanalal[1] has resigned his job. He has addressed the following letter to the great poet, Rabindranath Tagore.[2]

We are glad that Shri Nanalal has addressed this letter to the Poet and that he has resigned his job. Let him remain neutral. However, Gujarat will certainly ask him whether, after having addressed this letter, he is not bound to see that neither he nor others rest in peace till the desired result is achieved. His first task is to get together all those in Gujarat who are neutral.

Important Questions

A gentleman who describes himself as "a well-wisher of the Bardoli Taluka" has put to me in all frankness some fifteen questions. I do not reproduce the questions for want of space. However, I shall try to answer them in such a way that the reader will easily be able to guess the questions.

1. When I came to Bardoli earlier, I had asked the people to make better preparations. This time, going there after two months, I accepted the preparations as adequate, for I saw that more work had been done than what I had seen two months ago. I found there better preparations in regard to untouchability than anywhere else, and I am less afraid of violence breaking out in this taluka than in any other. Moreover, I am all admiration for the workers of this taluka.
2. I am convinced that this taluka observes better than any other the conditions which have been laid down. Moreover, why should we discuss a taluka which has simply not offered itself?
3. Relatively, a larger number of persons wear hand-spun cloth and the number is daily increasing.
4. The number of spinning-wheels in operation is enough to meet the taluka's requirements of yarn regularly.
5. Very little foreign cloth is sold in the taluka now. People have not got rid of their stock of such cloth but, I regret to say, have stored it away.
6. There must be hardly any persons in this taluka who look upon it as a sin for anyone to let oneself be touched by a *Dhed* or *Bhangi*.

[1] (1877-1946) an eminent Gujarati poet

[2] Not translated here. Nanalal had said that a fight between the Government and the non-co-operators seemed inevitable, and that it was the duty of those who were neutral in the struggle to see that both sides respected the rules of civilized fighting.

7. People are carrying out the various items of the non-co-operation programme fairly satisfactorily.
8. I think that in this taluka there is relatively less of hypocrisy, show, deceit, falsehood, etc. This is my reason for selecting it to start the struggle.
9. It is a great sin to force anyone to join even in the best of undertakings.
10. I hope that very few persons will pay revenue dues. It will be a sin if a non-co-operator speaks rudely even about the few who do.
11. Bardoli is a small taluka; the virtue of its people lies in the fact that they are unsophisticated, know nothing about political matters and are as meek as sheep. They have discrimination and can judge right and wrong. They understand the difference between worldly good and the higher good. Those who think see nothing to fear in this struggle. The goat does not go to the butcher of its own free will; if, then, the men and women of Bardoli—whether in their credulity or of their own free will and faith—go to jail without being forced to do so, if they let their property be attached and meet death without anger in their hearts, the world will worship them. They will win swaraj for India and win undying fame for themselves in history.
12. The very fact that I have selected a taluka like Bardoli even though Ahmedabad happens to be my permanent headquarters and has so much more of wealth, shrewdness, intelligence, business activity and a spirit of venture, reveals the especial beauty of this struggle. Swaraj can be won only if a humble and meek taluka like Bardoli gives proof of quiet courage. This is a struggle of the poor, of the innocent. In it, we should see people meek as sheep shedding their fear of one as strong as a tiger. This can happen only if Bardoli fights. I cannot fight with confidence through Ahmedabad or Bombay despite their wealth. I would constantly be afraid of being deceived or of violence breaking out in these places. In Bardoli, I have nothing to fear. God alone knows what would happen to me if I am deceived by Bardoli.
13. Shri Vithalbhai's speech about civil disobedience was intended to express not his lack of faith but his support. In that speech he uttered a note of warning and expressed doubts whether peace would be preserved till the end; now that civil disobedience is about to be started, what objection can he have?
14. I do not think that non-co-operation is a dangerous type of war. I am certain that simple but peaceful villagers can do better in it than people living in big cities. There will certainly be reason

for fear, and there will be ridicule too, if people take to their heels the moment repression starts; however, people who, though they do not fight shy of imprisonment, resort to violence are more dangerous and, even worse than that, will bring greater disgrace. We shall not lose the battle because of people who run away, but the atmosphere in the country is such that, out of fear of those who resort to violence, people may even give up in the end all talk of swaraj.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-2-1922

163. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

Silence Day [February 12, 1922][1]

CHI. DEVDAS,

Of course, I constantly think of you, but do not find time to write to you.

I got your wire; I hope you received mine sent from Bombay.

I have started a fast today. It will end on Friday. Surely, I could not have done less, could I? To start civil disobedience in an atmosphere of incivility is like putting one's hand in a snake-pit. Please do not be nervous on account of my fast. In any case do not take that as an example. It is the woman giving birth to a child who suffers the pains, others only help. I, too, wish to give birth to the ideals of non-violence and truth, so that I alone need bear the pains of fasting, etc. You and others may carry out self-purification to help me in my task and go on doing your appointed tasks. You personally are of course doing this. You have no share in these sins.

Keep sending me all the news from there regularly.

You will be glad to know that Harilal's sentence has not been reduced. I had not liked the news[2]. He is happy there. Malaviyaji left for Bombay yesterday. He was present at the Working Committee meeting.

I am sending you the following telegram:

"Your wire. Working Committee has indefinitely postponed Mass Civil Disobedience, other minor activities offensive chartacter. Am fasting till Friday evening by way of penance and warning people who with my name on lips have brutally hacked constables

[1] The five-day fast undertaken as a penance for the Chauri Chaura disaster began on the evening of Sunday, February 12, 1922.

[2] Earlier, news had been received that his sentence was reduced.

to death. Strongly advise wrong doers confess guilt and deliver themselves authorities. Do not fast yourself, do not worry, but work and pray."

Send telegrams and write letters to me regularly. Malaviyaji should reach there within a couple of days.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 7-10-1923

164. TELEGRAM TO ZAHUR AHMED[1]

[After *February 12, 1922*][2]

THANKS WIRE. MISREPRESENTATION INEVITABLE. BUT GOD WITH US. LET US DERIVE STRENGTH FROM HIM RATHER THAN FROM PUBLIC SUPPORT.

GANDHI

Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi, p. 235

165. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Monday, February 13, 1922

Could not help [fasting]. The fast will end on Friday evening. To do anything less than this seemed impossible. This is the least that I could do. This will be no suffering for me at all. Do not worry. Take good care of your health. Do not start a fast yourself. It is only the woman in childbirth who has to bear the pains. Others can but help. Today I have sent a telegraphic message to the Associated Press.

[From Gujarati]
Bapuni Prasadi, p. 45

[1] Of the Central Khilafat Committee

[2] The source mentions that this telegram was sent in reply to Zahur Ahmed's telegram informing Gandhiji of the "current agitation" in Bombay against his decision to suspend civil disobedience. This decision was ratified by the Working Committee at its meeting at Bardoli on February 11 and 12, 1922.

166. LETTER TO CHIMANDAS I. JAGTIANI

BARDOLI,
February 14, 1922

MY DEAR CHIMANDAS[1],

I have your letter.

I quite agree with you in the remarks you have made about the atmosphere in India. You will see that the Working Committee has come to the right conclusion. I am only hoping that all the different Committees will heartily co-operate. If they do we should have no difficulty whatsoever. Maganlal[2] is here, and I shall talk to him about a weaver for you in Sind. He told me he had already written offering the services of a demonstrator. A demonstrator is one from whom intelligent people can learn themselves. A teacher is more than a demonstrator. He must have the gift of imparting knowledge. There are not many such in the Ashram, but a demonstrator who is thoroughly competent can be easily spared. You and some others can pick up the art from him.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

CHIMANDAS, ESQ.
CONGRESS WEAVING ASHRAM
HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a photostat: G.N. 5736

[1] Dr. Chimandas Isardas Jagtiani, a Congress leader from Sind

[2] Maganlal Gandhi (1883-1928); son of Khushalchand Gandhi, Gandhiji's cousin; sometime manager of the Phoenix Settlement and later of the Satyagraha Ashram at Sabarmati

167. TELEGRAM TO SYED MAHMUD[1]

[On or after *February 14, 1922*]

RESOLUTIONS PASSED ON MERITS NO TRUCE WHATSOEVER. HOPE BENGAL WILL FULLY CARRY OUT W.C.'S RESOLUTIONS AND ADVISE PAYMENT CHOWKIDAR OTHER TAXES.

From a photostat: S.N. 7913

168. TELEGRAM TO DEVDAS GANDHI

BARDOLI,
February 15, 1922

DEVDAS
CONGRESS COMMITTEE
GORAKHPUR

NEVER MIND PRESS REPRESENTATIONS CORRECT AND FORGET SEND ME FULL LETTER AM QUITE BRIGHT.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 7918

169. LETTER TO SIR DANIEL HAMILTON

BARDOLI,
February 15, 1922

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Hodge[2] writes to me to say that you would like to have an hour's chat with me, and he has suggested that I should open the ground which I gladly do. I will not take up your time by

[1] Dr. Syed Mahmud (b. 1889); Congress leader from Bihar; jailed during freedom movement; Secretary, Central Khilafat Committee; member of Parliament. The telegram was sent in reply to Syed Mahmud's telegram of February 14, 1922, which read: "Working Committee's decision published today greatly surprising. People in Bengal and Bihar are disappointed. Great anxiety prevails. Bengal may not perhaps obey. Pray wire if any truce is made."

[2] A friend of Gandhiji and the addressee

trying to interest you in any other activity of mine except the spinning-wheel. Of all my outward activities, I do believe that the spinning-wheel is the most permanent and the most beneficial. I have abundant proof now to support my statement that the spinning-wheel will solve the problem of the economic distress in millions of India's homes, and it constitutes an effective insurance against famines.

You know the great scientist, Dr. P. C. Ray, but you may not know that he has also become an enthusiast on behalf of the spinning-wheel.[1] India does not need to be industrialized in the modern sense of the term. It has 7,50,000 villages scattered over a vast area 1,900 miles long, 1,500 broad. The people are rooted to the soil, and the vast majority are living a hand-to-mouth life. Whatever may be said to the contrary, having travelled throughout the length and breadth of the land with eyes open and having mixed with millions, there can be no doubt that pauperism is growing. There is no doubt also that the millions are living in enforced idleness for at least 4 months in the year. Agriculture does not need revolutionary changes. The Indian peasant requires a supplementary industry. The most natural is the introduction of the spinning-wheel, not the handloom. The latter cannot be introduced in every home, whereas the former can, and it used to be so even a century ago. It was driven out not by economic pressure, but by force deliberately used as can be proved from authentic records. The restoration, therefore, of the spinning-wheel solves the economic problem of India at a stroke. I know that you are a lover of India, that you are deeply interested in the economic and moral uplift of my country. I know too that you have great influence, I would like to enlist it on behalf of the spinning-wheel. It is the most effective force for introducing successful co-operative societies. Without honest co-operation of the millions, the enterprise can never be successful, and as it is already proving a means of weaning thousands of women from a life of shame, it is as moral an instrument as it is economic.

I hope you will not allow yourself to be prejudiced by anything you might have heard about my strange views about machinery. I have nothing to say against the development of any other industry in India by means of machinery, but I do say that to supply India with cloth manufactured either outside or inside through gigantic mills is an economic blunder of the first magnitude, just as it would be to supply cheap bread through huge bakeries

[1] *Vide*, "Dr. Ray on Charkha", 2-2-1922.

established in the chief centres in India and to destroy the family stove.[1]

Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 6-4-1922

170. LETTER TO S. A. BRELVI

BARDOLI,
February 15, 1922

I appreciate the affection underlying your telegram[2]. I could not break the fast in the middle of it, a fast that was so solemnly undertaken, but I assure you that I am not feeling it at all. All my activities are going on just as usual, and by providing me with shorthand assistance Mr. Bomanji[3] has just at the proper moment made my way so easy.

The Bombay Chronicle, 17-2-1922

[1] The following are excerpts from Sir Daniel Hamilton's reply: ". . . with reference to your remarks regarding the charkha, I may say from my own personal knowledge of Indian rural life, that given a fair chance, with the help of modern finance, not only the spinning-wheel but the handloom can compete successfully with steam power, the reason being that the four months' labour which is now largely wasted in the agricultural off season costs nothing. No yarn or cloth can be cheaper than that which costs only the price of the raw material.

. . . I quite agree with your opinion regarding the evils of the huge factory system. . . . What I want to see grow up in India, and I think it is what you want also, is a swaraj whose power will be measured in terms of healthy life rather than in terms of unhealthy money. . . . Meantime, I hope you will not be too hard on the Government. . . . I should like to think of you not as the destroying angel of the old regime, but as the Master Builder of the new. . . ."

[2] The telegram from S. A. Brelvi, editor of *The Bombay Chronicle,* expressed anxiety about Gandhiji's health during his fast following the Chauri Chaura tragedy.

[3] S. R. Bomanji

171. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

BARDOLI,
February 15, 1922

MY DEAR MAHADEV,

I have not heard from you for a long time, nor of you or anybody in your jail. Please let me know if you are permitted to write. Do not stop writing because you cannot do so in Gujarati. As I do not know what latitude you are permitted in the jail, I have not written to Govind although he is constantly before me in my mind. I had his charming letter. Malaviyaji has permitted me to reproduce his letters to Govind and Krishna Kant which I shall be doing some time.

I hope you all appreciated the suspension of mass civil disobedience. You will read the whole of my reasons in the forthcoming issue[1] of the *Young India* if you are permitted to get that paper. You will not worry about my fast. By the time you receive this, the little fast will have been over. I had really intended to undertake a much bigger thing, but I felt that this would be enough for me as also for those erring ones to whom it is addressed.

Malaviyaji, Mr. Jayakar and Mr. Natarajan were here on Saturday last. Malaviyaji stopped two days, the others one day. Devdas is still at Gorakhpur doing very good work. Pyarelal and Parasram are in Allahabad. I am staying on in Bardoli for some time. Maganlal and some others from the Ashram are in Bardoli in order to extend the operations of the handloom and the spinning-wheel.

This is the third day of my fast. It is early morning, and I am dictating this letter. I do not feel any the worse for the fast. I therefore do not expect any very great weakness on Friday.

Yours,
BAPU

SJT. MAHADEV H. DESAI
C/o THE SUPERINTENDENT
DISTRICT JAIL
AGRA

From a photostat: S.N. 7921

[1] Of February 16, 1922

172. INTERVIEW TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

BARDOLI,
February 15, 1922

QUESTION: Have you resolved on any definite programme of activity on your own part in the immediate or near future?

ANSWER: If your question refers to my pesonal programme, for the time being I propose to remain in Bardoli and watch the effect upon all the people of the constructive programme placed before them by the Working Committee, which, I am hoping, will be accepted by the All-India Congress Committee. There is enough work and enough variety for every real worker, but you will notice that it resolves itself into two things: spread of non-violence and spread of khaddar. The one is to mark a definite inward change and the other to mark a definite outward advance. India cannot hold her own against the world without non-violence, and she cannot become economically free without the universal adoption of the spinning-wheel.

Do you mean to go on any tour of India in the near future?

So far as I can see, not in the immediate future except that I shall have to go to Delhi to attend the All-India Congress Committee meeting.

People say that you will be compelled by circumstances to abandon all political activities and devote the rest of your life to tackling social problems like untouchability, intemperance and so on. Is there any such likelihood?

Not so far as I can see the present temper of the nation. In spite of the aberrations which I have noted India's has become solidly non-violent. I think, both the classes and the masses, and so long as Congressmen continue to endorse the programme laid down and not reject the gospels of non-violence and the spinning-wheel, I am not likely to abandon my present vocation. For me there is no distinction between politics and religion. Politics are a sham without a religious backing; and if I am today immersed in the political life of the country it is because politics, i.e., the political conditions of the country are the predominant part of the national life. No advance is possible without touching the political life at one point or another.

In view of the danger of violence would it not be better to give up all idea of mass civil disobedience and concentrate on items of less risk such as

defiance of notifications under the Criminal Law Amendment Act and perfect the organization in at least one city, say Calcutta, and fill the jails?

I do not think that it is necessary to give up the idea of mass civil disobedience. There is nothing wrong in the idea. It is not only not an immoral thing but it is a right of the people which can never be surrendered. It simply means that the masses should be trained to act non-violently. What is there wrong in that ideal? I confess that I am not going to embark upon mass civil disobedience hastily. I would want almost absolute assurances before I think next time of embarking upon mass disobedience myself. After all, the civil disobedience in South Africa was mass civil disobedience; there were no untoward incidents in that campaign. The disobedience in Kaira in 1918 was also mass civil disobedience and there was not a single instance of violence. Mass civil disobedience for the whole of India and in the name of India is merely an extension of a successful programme. I would certainly not have stopped the Bardoli programme had there been no danger of it being thoughtlessly copied by other parts of India. I am certain that in spite of outbreaks of violence in other parts of India, the people of Bardoli would have kept fully non-violent but that would not have served the national purpose. If Bardoli had to offer mass civil disobedience for local grievances I would certainly not have been stopped.

If you can effect a breach in one place or break a single link you will break the whole chain. Will it not, therefore, be advisable to concentrate on the fight for municipal rights and bring Government to its knees?

You cannot do it through a single programme. It will certainly help, but to attain swaraj through mere municipal reform would be a slow process. I am certainly hoping that Ahmedabad and Surat will give a good account of themselves and demonstrate the utter futility of the coercion which the Government of Bombay has thoughtlessly attempted and whilst, if Ahmedabad and Surat succeed, their success will indirectly help the national movement, it will not solve the question of swaraj. Swaraj movement means mass education which you cannot impart directly through a few cities perfecting and achieving independent government. Indeed the disciplined opposition that Ahmedabad, Surat and Nadiad are pluckily offering has become possible because of the general awakening. When the experiment is completed and if it becomes successful, the people will see how the citizens of these three places will have shown grit, constructive ability, capacity for suffering and all other noble qualities that go to make a nation great. But that

experiment by itself cannot give India swaraj within the time contemplated by the Congress programmes.

Are you going to organize municipal fight in Ahmedabad and Surat?

I am not; but I am hoping that the citizens of both these places will not give up a struggle which they have commenced in right earnest.

There is a class of people who have begun to think that your idea of India attaining a non-violent condition is Utopian; and they say that even if after two years' incessant effort on your behalf to teach non-violence to your countrymen the country becomes pacific and you begin your civil disobedience campaign, any single mad cap by a violent deed of political complexion can disturb the harmony. They add that you cannot expect all the 315 millions of the Indians to be non-violent even after centuries of preaching: "The great prophets like Buddha, Chaitanya, Nanak, Kabir who preached only love and non-violence have not succeeded even after 2,500 years in making India entirely non-violent. Violence is bound to exist so long [as] humanity is not raised to the condition of angels and saints. Even if the country remains quiet for a long period to come, what guarantee is there that oppression may not engender violence on the part of some individuals? The mob-mind when outraged beyond control is bound to be inflamed and go mad. Should the whole country, for the crimes of a few individuals, set at rest the longing for swaraj, a satisfying solution of the Khilafat and justice to the Punjab atrocities?"

In the face of such hard facts, is it not wise to accept violence as inevitable and only try to check it and not stamp it out completely from the surface of India? Many say that the risk will always be there and civil disobedience without such risk will never be practicable. They urge that you yourself said the choice is between lawless repression and mass civil disobedience with all its dangers. May I know what you have got to say in reply to this?

This sermon in question betrays woeful ignorance of the struggle and the bearing of non-violence upon it. I do not mean you are ignorant. You are merely the mouthpiece for people who are sceptics. I should certainly despair of success if I attempted anything that Jesus, Buddha or Mahomed failed to achieve. On the contrary my attempt is exceedingly humble or simple. I do not believe that India cannot be taught to see the very simple truth that for her to think of attaining swaraj by an armed conflict is an impossible dream for several generations. There is no country on the face of the earth so ill fitted for an armed conflict as India. It may be that the forces of violence may not be sufficiently controlled in order to conduct a campaign of non-violent

mass civil disobedience. If that is the conclusion at which all the leaders arrive it does not mean that India cannot attain her freedom by non-violent means. There are many forms of civil disobedience open to a satyagrahi; but I confess that mass civil disobedience is the shortest cut. If it proves to be impossible I have no doubt that a milder programme of civil disobedience can be conceived so as to give the people a training in self-sacrifice. From this the masses will learn the law of suffering, in its application to the nation, as they today practise it for domestic affairs. There is certainly no swaraj without going through the fire and suffering and it gladdens my heart to read reports that I daily receive of people undergoing incredible suffering without retaliation for the sake of the nation.

I have, therefore, absolutely no misgivings on the point. I am not trying to achieve the impossible. Violence there always will be, and I should not be perturbed by stray cases of violence. I have advised suspension of civil disobedience because the violence practised near Gorakhpur was not individual, not in connection with any private wrong but from a vague sense of political wrong. I do not despair of the people bearing the necessity of self-restraint on occasions such as at Chauri Chaura which led to popular violence. Under much graver provocation the masses have remained calm during the year almost all over India, as when public meetings have been forcibly broken up. These were all occasions for outbreak of mob fury but the people have kept exemplary restraint. I believe that slowly but surely the spirit of non-violence is spreading. It is really not so difficult or impracticable as the string of questions put to me suggests. The incident at Chauri Chaura would have been impossible if the Congress and the Khilafat organizations were perfect. It is all a question of perfecting the Congress organization. And it is the ABC of political science that you can do little unless you have got a fairly good organization. The Government succeeds because it can offer organized violence. The Congress will succeed when its organization which is based on non-violence is also perfected. The constructive programme mapped by the Working Committee is an attempt in that direction. It should also be remembered that non-violence being an organic charge can be organized in much less time than violence. Think of what India has done in the way of non-violence during the 18 months—calculate the generations that must elapse before you can teach India the use of arms!

Have you no fear that the machinery of Congress organization will be loosened and there will be absence of zeal on account of repeated disappointments?

I have absolutely no such fear for the simple reason that earnest workers must realize as they have realized already, that there must be in all organic growth constant adaptability to changes that take place in the environment.

Have you no fear, Mahatmaji, that as the result of the suspension people might lose faith in your principle of non-violence?

I have none.

What about the prisoners at least 15,000 of whom have gone to jail in expectation of the early attainment of swaraj? Will not that question alone drive you to discover some form of resistance at least to get them released?

The issue has been changed by the Gorakhpur tragedy. The Congress must, for the time being, sacrifice the prisoners. They must suffer for the popular misdeeds at Gorakhpur.

Do you think the fanatical portion will not get out of hand through indefinite suspension of mass civil disobedience?

I hope not. If the fanatical portion will get out of hand it will demonstrate lack of Congress discipline and, therefore, justify suspension of mass civil disobedience.

Do you now expect the Moderates to rally to the Congress in any appreciable numbers?

I certainly hope that many Moderates will take the opportunity now offered of rallying round the Congress standard.

When the moment for beginning civil disobedience will arrive do you hope to commence it at Bardoli?

If mass civil disobedience has ever to be embarked upon I am certainly expecting that the honour will be given to Bardoli. But I am hoping that by that time not merely Bardoli but many other places will be ready for self-sacrifice.

The Bombay Chronicle, 18-2-1922

173. NOTES

The Ali Brothers

Much information has been received during the week about the Brothers. I have seen, too, the contradiction by the Government. Moreover, the Brothers and Dr. Kitchlew were produced in the balcony of the jail to an impatient and angry crowd that had heard all kinds of ugly rumours including the reported death of one of the Brothers. If the Magistrate's version is strictly correct, the reports from Karachi are exaggerated. But after the production by the authorities of Mr. Mahadev Desai's certificate of character, although they knew that Mr. Desai had suffered grievously before the certificate, I discount the Magistrate's half contradiction. It is at the same time true that there has been inaccuracy in the Karachi reports. We now see that they have not been as inhumanly treated as the reports would lead one to believe. But the authorities are themselves to blame if they would observe needless secrecy about jail treatment and will not permit relatives to meet them. Surely if they have nothing to hide, they should not hesitate to permit relatives of prisoners to see them, not as a privilege, not for the prisoners' sake, but for their own sake when the anxious relatives suspect treatment worse than the authorities are prepared to admit.

Sabarmati Prisoners

Take for instance the Sabarmati prisoners. I understand that the information[1] given by me last week is quite accurate and that the ill treatment refers not merely to Mr. Jairamdas but to Maulana Hassan Ahmed and two Dharwar prisoners who are in the same jail. The Maulana and one of the Dharwar prisoners, Mr. Dabhade, are old men near sixty. To punish them in the manner they were being punished for their objection to be searched, is surely inhuman and cannot be justified even in the interest of "law and order" about which the Government betray such feverish anxiety. Here is an extract from my correspondent's letter:

> Mr. Jairamdas has grown thinner. He was allowed to read the *Times of India* and the *Sind Observer* by the Inspector General of Prisons,

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 9-2-1922, under the sub-title "In the Sabarmati Jail".

> but the Bombay Government by an order has stopped the papers. The Inspector General had allowed him to get books from outside and allowed the use of lamp upto 10 p.m., but the higher authorities have prohibited these too. Recent Government orders are that no concessions be shown to political prisoners and the rule of daily search be put into force in their case. Maulana Hassan Ahmed and two other prisoners have also refused to be searched; so they were all punished with handcuffs at night. This was for three nights. Other punishments were to follow if they did not submit. It would be no surprise if whipping also is resorted to. Owing to handcuffs they cannot get proper sleep and cannot answer calls of nature during night. During the day-time they are put to work. Maulana Hassan Ahmed cannot say his prayers owing to handcuffs which are put on from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. Mr. Jairamdas was allowed shoes in the beginning. This has been disallowed.

Let the Government deny these serious allegations if they dare.

DELEGALIZING CONGRESS OFFICES

The following from the Congress Secretary, Faridpur, speaks for itself[1]:

It is not an easy matter to advise what to do when one is subjected to the terrorism of the kind described. It is a matter simply of not being "washed out". It is possible that the landlords will take fright and not give us their houses for offices. We must then hold them in the open whilst we are kept free. If they take us all to jail and keep us together, we must hold consultations there and evolve swaraj in the jails, as they are doing in Agra, by spinning, by having mixed prayer meetings and mixed hymns, and otherwise acting together in so far as the jail regulations will permit. When they are tired of beating us they will certainly take to shooting us. And when they do that and if we do not quail and can sing out "eyes front", we have established swaraj, because we have attained infinite capacity for suffering.

"AS IN ALL OTHER COUNTRIES"

I would not have pictured such a grim prospect before us but for the callous defence, offered by Sir William Vincent, of almost every charge brought by me in proof of lawless repression categorically denied by the Viceroy. It is evidently now considered

[1] The letter, not reproduced here, described how Congress offices had been "broken up", volunteers beaten and landlords warned not to let out houses for unlawful assemblies or offices.

necessary to throw off the veneer of polish which used formerly to be given by total repudiation of uncomfortable facts. As such a thing has become practically impossible in view of the courage with which the public has now come forward to expose every wrong, the Government have taken up the bold attitude of defending every atrocity. Sir William evidently considers the members of the Assembly to be specially gullible. For, after treating them to general denials, telling them it is not the province of the Assembly to review the measures of the Provincial administrations, he thus defends the gravest of the charges:

> There are two particular charges however to which I must draw attention. One relates to the dispersal of unlawful assemblies by force and I want to make it quite clear that, where it is necessary to disperse unlawful assemblies and such assemblies refuse to disperse when ordered to do so by competent authority, it is the intention of the Government that "as in all other countries" they should be dispersed by force when this is necessary. In such cases force is the only remedy. In the second place attention is drawn, in this statement of Mr. Gandhi's, to the question of searches and arrests by night. The Government of India will give no undertaking that searches and arrests will not be made by night or by day as may be found necessary.

This is as frank as one could wish. It does not much matter that the use of force against unarmed men and midnight trespasses are resorted to in the name of ordinary processes. It merely sustains the charge that this Government is ordinarily bad and intolerable. The open avowal was indeed necessary, for the jails having lost their terror, the next thing to do was to set up a system of corporal punishments and open robbery so as to make the people realize what refusal to submit to the will of the administrators meant for them. We must therefore expect greater use, not less, of corporal punishments and nocturnal raids. When we get used to these as our common lot, the next natural step is day and night shooting. And I have recently been preparing the non-co-operators to expect that final reward reserved for lovers of freedom. Willing death is deliverance. According to Hindu belief the highest known form of freedom, i.e., salvation, is possible only when a man voluntarily surrenders his body and becomes totally indifferent to bodily wants. Political freedom of a disciplined character is a prelude to the higher type. It is therefore in the fitness of things that we should voluntarily surrender our possessions including our bodies for the attainment of national freedom.

Sir William defends the assaults and looting because they are resorted to in "all other countries". I take leave to deny that peaceful assemblies, no matter how unlawful, are ever dispersed by force in any other country or that it has been ever before done even in India. Such assemblies are dealt with by summoning the conveners, and if necessary the audience, and imprisoning them. Abolition of corporal punishment is the first step to civilized government. Let the public bear in mind the fact that these public meetings take place not to preach or practise violence but to test a precious public right. Speakers and spectators may be arrested but certainly not assaulted and dragged.

As if Sir William felt the shame of his brutal confession, he wound up his brazen defence by irrelevantly dragging in the Gorakhpur incident, to prove that volunteers who sign the pledge of non-violence are not all non-violent. The brutal conduct of the Chauri Chaura crowd was indefensible. One does not know whether it contained volunteers. Let the volunteers who do violence be punished by all means; but no such mob misconduct can possibly excuse the use of force against innocent and inoffensive men.

But non-co-operators must beware of being enraged by such lawlessness of the Government. They have to live it down by patient suffering and not even mental retaliation. The incidents I am collecting from week to week are intended to prove the infinite capacity of the Government to use force. We must, therefore, develop an equally infinite capacity for suffering if we are to replace Government by force by Government based upon popular will. Force will be used even under popular Government, but it will then, "as in all other countries" be used against those only who seek to thwart the public will by force. Mr. Montagu puts the Moderates clearly on the wrong track by telling them that European Governments are based on force. It would be impossible in London or Paris to disperse peaceful crowds even though they might have gathered together in breach of a law, unless they have gathered to use or to preach the use of force.

SUSPENSION

But Chauri Chaura has opened up a new duty before non-co-operators. The resolutions of the Working Committee reproduced elsewhere[1], call upon non-co-operators for the time being to suspend all civil disobedience activities, mass as well as

[1] *Vide* "Working Committee's Resolutions at Bardoli", 12-2-1922.

individual. Till the All-India Congress Committee has met, all civil disobedience must stop whether defensive or offensive. I am hoping that the All-India Congress Committee will confirm the action of the Working Committee. In my opinion, mass civil disobedience must be stopped for a long time, at least to the end of the year. It is evident that we have not obtained the necessary control over the masses. Individual offensive civil disobedience too must stop for some time. But the Working Committee leaves untouched all normal Congress activities which are necessary for our purpose, although they may be prohibited. Thus we must enrol volunteers in strict conformity with the pledge, though not for defiance of the notifications, but for actual Congress work. So must we carry on khaddar propaganda. It will be noticed that the Working Committee has discounted picketing foreign cloth shops for the time being. The only picketing permitted is in connection with liquor shops and that too by persons of proved good character. I hope therefore that all workers will loyally abide by the resolutions of the Working Committee and enthusiastically take up the constructive work sketched by it. The programme of construction should bring together all parties with the common goal—the Khilafat, the Punjab and swaraj.

A Silent Worker

Andhradesha has lost one of its finest silent workers. K. Hanumantharao laboured for the great educational institution[1] at Masulipatam which is the pride of Andhradesha. He lived for it and died for it. Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya[2] writes the following touching letter[3]:

The friends of the deceased have lost no time in issuing an appeal for one lac of rupees for a memorial to the deceased. It is not intended to use the money in vain show but to put on a sound footing the financial condition of the institution for which the deceased slaved day and night. I heartily commend the appeal not only to every Andhra patriot but also to many others who knew Hanumantharao or visited his noble institution.

Agha Mahomed Safdar

Although the successor of Lala Lajpat Rai, Agha Mahomed Safdar, was arrested and tried and released by the Sialkot

[1] The Andhra Jatheeya Kalasala

[2] 1880-1959; medical practitioner, politician and author; editor, *Janmabhumi*; President, Indian National Congress, 1949; Governor of Madhya Pradesh

[3] Not reproduced here; it described the passing away of Hanumantharao and appealed for funds for the institution for which he had worked.

Magistrate, it was not to be expected that he would remain free for any length of time. He has now been re-arrested and is to be tried in Lahore. He was arrested whilst he was about to address a meeting at Ghartal, a village 18 miles from Sialkot. The audience consisted of over one thousand villagers. There was no violence. And the meeting was continued by the companions of the Agha Saheb as if nothing had happened.

Sikh Honour

The Sikh awakening seems to be truly wonderful. Not only has the Akali party become a party of effective non-violence but it is evolving a fine code of honour. The Gurdwara Committee is now insisting on the release of Pandit Dina Nath, a non-Sikh who was arrested in connection with the keys affair[1]. I must reproduce the courageous notice[2] issued by the Committee.

Ahmedabad and Surat

Ahmedabad and Surat Municipalities have been superseded —not because they have been found inefficient but because they have been too efficient and too independent.[3] These two municipalities and that of Nadiad have been putting up a brave, dignified and orderly fight against the Government interference and undue control. Their crime consisted in freeing primary education from Government control. They gave up Government grant. Be it noted that the elected councillors who have commanded a majority have always acted after close consultation with the rate-payers. But that is just what the Government evidently does not want. It makes the public opinion effective.

The duty before the councillors and the electors is quite simple. They must still retain control of primary education. The rate-payers may refuse to pay the rates to the nominated committee that the Government may impose upon the citizens and they must pay for the national education of their children. The councillors must keep together and put up as it were a national municipality in so far as it is practicable. In my opinion there is hardly a department, for the running of which enlightened citizens require Government aid. There is no earthly reason why the Ahmedabadis, the Nadiadis and the Surtis should not be able

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 12-1-1922, under the sub-title "The Gurdwara Movement".

[2] Not reproduced here

[3] Early in February, the Ahmedabad Municipality was suspended and the Collector took over its work.

to sweep and light their own streets, educate their own children and look after their sick and their water-supply without hanging on to the Government. The police control they do not possess. The only thing for which they may need Government assistance is in enforcing payment of rates. Replace Government force by force of pulbic opinion and you have the sanction for collecting rates. More money is raised in Ahmedabad by voluntary contributions than by enforced rates. The public will watch the duel between nominated committees and popularly elected representatives in awakened constituencies.

CROWDED OUT

An important letter about the Delhi Jail treatment confirming the information given in these pages has been crowded out this week together with much other important matter.

Young India, 16-2-1922

174. THE CRIME OF CHAURI CHAURA

God has been abundantly kind to me. He has warned me the third time that there is not as yet in India that truthful and non-violent atmosphere which and which alone can justify mass disobedience which can be at all described as civil, which means gentle, truthful, humble, knowing, wilful yet loving, never criminal and hateful.

He warned me in 1919 when the Rowlatt Act agitation was started. Ahmedabad, Viramgam, and Kheda erred; Amritsar and Kasur erred. I retraced my steps, called it a Himalayan miscalculation[1], humbled myself before God and man, and stopped not merely mass civil disobedience but even my own which I knew was intended to be civil and non-violent.

The next time it was through the events of Bombay that God gave a terrific warning. He made me eyewitness of the deeds of the Bombay mob on the 17th November. The mob acted in the interest of non-co-operation. I announced my intention to stop the mass civil disobedience which was to be immediately started in Bardoli. The humiliation was greater than in 1919. But it did me good. I am sure that the nation gained by the stopping. India stood for truth and non-violence by the suspension.

[1] *Vide* Vol. XV, pp. 435-9.

But the bitterest humiliation was still to come. Madras did give the warning, but I heeded it not. But God spoke clearly through Chauri Chaura. I understand that the constables who were so brutally hacked to death had given much provocation. They had even gone back upon the word just given by the Inspector that they would not be molested, but when the procession had passed the stragglers were interfered with and abused by the constables. The former cried out for help. The mob returned. The constables opened fire. The little ammunition they had was exhausted and they retired to the *Thana* for safety. The mob, my informant tells me, therefore set fire to the *Thana*. The self-imprisoned constables had to come out for dear life and as they did so, they were hacked to pieces and the mangled remains were thrown into the raging flames.

It is claimed that no non-co-operation volunteer had a hand in the brutality and that the mob had not only the immediate provocation but they had also general knowledge of the high-handed tyranny of the police in that district. No provocation can possibly justify the brutal murder of men who had been rendered defenceless and who had virtually thrown themselves on the mercy of the mob. And when India claims to be non-violent and hopes to mount the throne of Liberty through non-violent means, mob-violence even in answer to grave provocation is a bad augury. Suppose the "non-violent" disobedience of Bardoli was permitted by God to succeed, the Government had abdicated in favour of the victors of Bardoli, who would control the unruly element that must be expected to perpetrate inhumanity upon due provocation? Non-violent attainment of self-government presupposes a non-violent control over the violent elements in the country. Non-violent non-co-operators can only succeed when they have succeeded in attaining control over the hooligans of India, in other words, when the latter also have learnt patriotically or religiously to refrain from their violent activities at least whilst the campaign of non-co-operation is going on. The tragedy at Chauri Chaura, therefore, roused me thoroughly.

"But what about your manifesto to the Viceroy and your rejoinder to his reply?" spoke the voice of Satan. It was the bitterest cup of humiliation to drink. "Surely it is cowardly to withdraw the next day after pompous threats to the Government and promises to the people of Bardoli." Thus Satan's invitation was to deny Truth and therefore Religion, to deny God Himself. I put my doubts and troubles before the Working Committee and other associates whom I found near me. They did not all agree with me

at first. Some of them probably do not even now agree with me. But never has a man been blessed, perhaps, with colleagues and associates so considerate and forgiving as I have. They understood my difficulty and patiently followed my argument. The result is before the public in the shape of the resolutions of the Working Committee.[1] The drastic reversal of practically the whole of the aggressive programme may be politically unsound and unwise, but there is no doubt that it is religiously sound, and I venture to assure the doubters that the country will have gained by my humiliation and confession of error.

The only virtue I want to claim is Truth and Non-violence. I lay no claim to superhuman powers. I want none. I wear the same corruptible flesh that the weakest of my fellow beings wears and am therefore as liable to err as any. My services have many limitations, but God has upto now blessed them in spite of the imperfections.

For, confession of error is like a broom that sweeps away dirt and leaves the surface cleaner than before, I feel stronger for my confession. And the cause must prosper for the retracing. Never has man reached his destination by persistence in deviation from the straight path.

It has been urged that Chauri Chaura cannot affect Bardoli. There is danger, it is argued, only if Bardoli is weak enough to be swayed by Chauri Chaura and is betrayed into violence. I have no doubt whatsoever on that account. The people of Bardoli are in my opinion the most peaceful in India. But Bardoli is but a speck on the map of India. Its effort cannot succeed unless there is perfect co-operation from the other parts. Bardoli's disobedience will be civil only when the other parts of India remain non-violent. Just as the addition of a grain of arsenic to a pot of milk renders it unfit as food so will the civility of Bardoli prove unacceptable by the addition of the deadly poison from Chauri Chaura. The latter represents India as much as Bardoli.

Chauri Chaura is after all an aggravated symptom. I have never imagined that there has been no violence, mental or physical, in the places where repression is going on. Only I have believed, I still believe and the pages of *Young India* amply prove, that the repression is out of all proportion to the insignificant popular violence in the areas of repression. The determined holding of meetings in prohibited areas I do not call violence. The violence I am referring to is the throwing of brickbats or intimidation and coercion prac-

[1] Passed at its meeting at Bardoli on February 11 and 12, 1922

tised in stray cases. As a matter of fact in civil disobedience there should be no excitement. Civil disobedience is a preparation for mute suffering. Its effect is marvellous though unperceived and gentle. But I regarded a certain amount of excitement as inevitable, certain amount of unintended violence even pardonable, i.e., I did not consider civil disobedience impossible in somewhat imperfect conditions. Under perfect conditions disobedience when civil is hardly felt. But the present movement is admittedly a dangerous experiment under fairly adverse conditions.

The tragedy of Chauri Chaura is really the index finger. It shows the way India may easily go if drastic precautions be not taken. If we are not to evolve violence out of non-violence, it is quite clear that we must hastily retrace our steps and re-establish an atmosphere of peace, re-arrange our programme and not think of starting mass civil disobedience until we are sure of peace being retained in spite of mass civil disobedience being started and in spite of Government provocation. We must be sure of unauthorized portions not starting mass civil disobedience.

As it is, the Congress organization is still imperfect and its instructions are still perfunctorily carried out. We have not established Congress Committees in every one of the villages. Where we have, they are not perfectly amenable to our instructions. We have not probably more than one crore of members on the roll. We are in the middle of February, yet not many have paid the annual four-anna subscription for the current year. Volunteers are indifferently enrolled. They do not conform to all the conditions of their pledge. They do not even wear hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar. All the Hindu volunteers have not yet purged themselves of the sin of untouchability. All are not free from the taint of violence. Not by their imprisonment are we going to win swaraj or serve the holy cause of the Khilafat or attain the ability to stop payment to faithless servants. Some of us err in spite of ourselves. But some others among us sin wilfully. They join Volunteer Corps well knowing that they are not and do not intend to remain non-violent. We are thus untruthful even as we hold the Government to be untruthful. We dare not enter the kingdom of Liberty with mere lip homage to Truth and Non-violence.

Suspension of mass civil disobedience and subsidence of excitement are necessary for further progress, indeed indispensable to prevent further retrogression. I hope, therefore, that by suspension every Congressman or woman will not only not feel disappointed but he or she will feel relieved of the burden of unreality and of national sin.

Let the opponent glory in our humiliation or so-called defeat. It is better to be charged with cowardice and weakness than to be guilty of denial of our oath and sin against God. It is a million times better to *appear* untrue before the world than to *be* untrue to ourselves.

And so, for me the suspension of mass civil disobedience and other minor activities that were calculated to keep up excitement is not enough penance for my having been the instrument, however involuntary, of the brutal violence by the people at Chauri Chaura.

I must undergo personal cleansing. I must become a fitter instrument able to register the slightest variation in the moral atmosphere about me. My prayers must have much deeper truth and humility about them than they evidence. And for me there is nothing so helpful and cleansing as a fast accompanied by the necessary mental co-operation.

I know that the mental attitude is everything. Just as a prayer may be merely a mechanical intonation as of a bird, so may a fast be a mere mechanical torture of the flesh. Such mechanical contrivances are valueless for the purpose intended. Again, just as a mechanical chant may result in the modulation of voice, a mechanical fast may result in purifying the body. Neither will touch the soul within.

But a fast undertaken for fuller self-expression, for attainment of the spirit's supremacy over the flesh, is a most powerful factor in one's evolution. After deep consideration, therefore, I am imposing on myself a five days' continuous fast, permitting myself water. It commenced on Sunday[1] evening; it ends on Friday evening. This is the least I must do.

I have taken into consideration the All-India Congress Committee meeting in front of me.[2] I have in mind the anxious pain even the five days' fast will cause many friends; but I can no longer postpone the penance nor lessen it.

I urge co-workers not to copy my example. The motive in their case will be lacking. They are not the originators of civil disobedience. I am in the unhappy position of a surgeon proved skill-less to deal with an admittedly dangerous case. I must either abdicate or acquire greater skill. Whilst the personal penance is not only necessary but obligatory on me, the exemplary self-restraint prescribed by the Working Committee is surely sufficient

[1] February 12, 1922

[2] It was held on February 24 and 25 at Delhi.

penance for everyone else. It is no small penance and, if sincerely carried out, it can become infinitely more real and better than fasting. What can be richer and more fruitful than a greater fulfilment of the vow of non-violence in thought, word, and deed or the spread of that spirit? It will be more than food for me during the week to observe that comrades are all, silently and without idle discussion, engaged in fulfilling the constructive programme sketched by the Working Committee, in enlisting Congress members after making sure that they understand the Congress creed of truth and non-violence for the attainment of swaraj, in daily and religiously spinning for a fixed time, in introducing the wheel of prosperity and freedom in every home, in visiting "untouchable" homes and finding out their wants, in inducing national schools to receive "untouchable" children, in organizing social service specially designed to find a common platform for every variety of man and woman, and in visiting the homes which the drink curse is desolating, in establishing real *panchayats* and in organizing national schools on a proper footing. The workers will be better engaged in these activities than in fasting. I hope, therefore, that no one will join me in fasting, either through false sympathy or an ignorant conception of the spiritual value of fasting.

All fasting and all penance must as far as possible be secret. But my fasting is both a penance and a punishment, and a punishment has to be public. It is penance for me and punishment for those whom I try to serve, for whom I love to live and would equally love to die. They have unintentionally sinned against the laws of the Congress though they were sympathizers if not actually connected with it. Probably they hacked the constables—their countrymen and fellow beings—with my name on their lips. The only way love punishes is by suffering. I cannot even wish them to be arrested. But I would let them know that I would suffer for their breach of the Congress creed. I would advise those who feel guilty and repentant to hand themselves voluntarily to the Government for punishment and make a clean confession. I hope that the workers in the Gorakhpur district will leave no stone unturned to find out the evil-doers and urge them to deliver themselves into custody. But whether the murderers accept my advice or not, I would like them to know that they have seriously interfered with swaraj operations, that in being the cause of the postponement of the movement in Bardoli, they have injured the very cause they probably intended to serve. I would like them to know, too, that this movement is not a cloak or a preparation for violence. I would, at any

rate, suffer every humiliation, every torture, absolute ostracism and death itself to prevent the movement from becoming violent or a precursor of violence. I make my penance public also because I am now denying myself the opportunity of sharing their lot with the prisoners. The immediate issue has again shifted. We can no longer press for the withdrawal of notifications or discharge of prisoners. They and we must suffer for the crime of Chauri Chaura. The incident proves, whether we wish it or no, the unity of life. All, including even the administrators, must suffer. Chauri Chaura must stiffen the Government, must still further corrupt the police, and the reprisals that will follow must further demoralize the people. The suspension and the penance will take us back to the position we occupied before the tragedy. By strict discipline and purification we regain the moral confidence required for demanding the withdrawal of notifications and the discharge of prisoners.

If we learn the full lesson of the tragedy, we can turn the curse into a blessing. By becoming truthful and non-violent, both in spirit and deed, and by making the swadeshi i.e., the khaddar programme complete, we can establish full swaraj and redress the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs without a single person having to offer civil disobedience.

Young India, 16-2-1922

175. TELEGRAM TO DEVDAS GANDHI

BARDOLI,
February 16, 1922

DEVDAS
CONGRESS COMMITTEE
GORAKHPUR

CONDITION FIRST CLASS. I TOO DID NOT UNDERSTAND YOUR TELEGRAM. COULD NOT MAKE OUT THE HORRORS YOU REFERRED.

GANDHI

From a photostat : S.N. 7924

176. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

Friday [February 17, 1922][1]

CHI. DEVDAS,

I am sorry that there are no letters from you. I can understand that you should be busy all the while, but at a time like this I do expect to have detailed reports from you. If I get them, I can know the situation and also think about further steps. Amongst the multifarious duties of a soldier, submitting the report of his work to the general is one.

The fast will end today in an hour's time. Except that I feel weak, I have suffered nothing. I am sure you get copies of *Young India* and *Navajivan*.

I shall be in Delhi on the 24th. I shall leave here on the 22nd. You may take it that I shall be at Delhi on the 24th and 25th. After that, I may have to go to Calcutta. Nothing is certain. Ba is of course here.

Hope you are well.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

This is what has appeared in the *Times*. You may give a reply if you think one is called for. Send to me the reply you give. Return the cutting also to me.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 7682

[1] The letter was written on the last day of the five-day fast undertaken on account of the Chauri Chaura incidents.

177. DIVINE WARNING

A man is pardoned if he errs once; if he errs a second time, even then a liberal-minded person will pardon him. But what if he errs thrice? What else will he merit except dismissal?

We describe anyone who gets cheated once as simple, and anyone who gets cheated twice as credulous. If, now, a person allows himself to be cheated thrice, what but a fool should we call him?

Bardoli's civil disobedience has vanished like a dream. God meant to stop it at the very moment when it was to start. There is nothing to wonder at in this. If for one like Rama the hour of coronation turned out to be the hour for going to the forest[1], why speak of Bardoli? It is only when we have had the experience again and again of things which had once appeared real to us having faded away into dreams, that we shall learn the true meaning of swaraj. At present, only one meaning of swaraj seems true to me. Swaraj is nothing but the sincere effort to win it. The thing itself will seem to move further away from us the more we run after it.

This is true of every ideal. As a person becomes ever more truthful, truth runs farther away from him because he knows that what he mistakenly thought to be truth was not really the truth.

Hence, one who follows truth—one who acts rightly—is ever humble; he sees his shortcomings more clearly day by day. *Brahmacharya* is ever running away from a person who tries to observe it, for he discovers that, deep down, desire is still strong in him. He is never satisfied with being able to observe physical continence. *Moksha* also recedes farther away from an aspirant. This fact inspired the profound expression "neti"[2]. A number of great *rishis*[3] in ancient times set out to seek *moksha*, to realize the *atman*. In its pursuit, they descended into many valleys and climbed many hills, jumped over thorny hedges and discovered, at the end of the journey: "It cannot be this". Who knows how many of them

[1] King Dasharatha was forced by Kaikeyi, his youngest queen and Rama's step-mother, on the strength of an old promise he had made to her to abandon the proposed installation of Rama on the throne and to send the prince, instead, to live in the forest for fourteen years. Rama willingly honoured his father's word.

[2] Literally, "not this"; descriptions of God in the Vedas often conclude with this assertion of the inadequacy of every description of Divine Reality.

[3] Seers

caught a faint glimpse of *moksha*? And yet they were so discerning, so intelligent that, as we know, they were not deceived.

I, therefore, see ever more clearly that for us swaraj lies in our struggle to win it.

In 1919, Ahmedabad and Viramgam, Amritsar and Kasur showed my error and satyagraha was suspended.[1] Last November, I witnessed in Bombay man's barbarism and again suspended mass civil disobedience.[2] Even then I did not learn the lesson completely. Now it is Chauri Chaura which has punished me. Who knows how many more such blows are in store for me! If now people reject my leadership and regard me a fool, they will not be to blame.

If I do not know human nature, why do I meddle with such affairs?

I just cannot hold myself back. I also cannot but admit my error when I see it. I would welcome being dismissed, I would be very happy indeed to be counted a fool, but I will certainly not defile my soul by retaining the filth of error in my body.

"If the king gets angry, the city will shelter me; if God is displeased, where shall I turn?" I do not know if Mira actually composed any song with this line, but she certainly lived her life in that spirit. We may bear the world's reproaches, but we should not be guilty in the eyes of God. We should heed His warning.

Had we proceeded with the proposed civil disobedience in Bardoli despite the divine warning from Gorakhpur, we would have certainly regretted the step. The people would have suffered much and our regard for truth and non-violence would have been discredited. We are known as cowards and then we would have been regarded as liars as well. If other parts of India remain peaceful, then only should Bardoli start disobedience—that was what I said, that was the condition. If Bardoli had started civil disobedience despite the violation of that condition, then it too would have sinned.

If anyone argues that such peace will never be preserved in the country, we may not contradict him. This is, however, an argument for giving up the path of satyagraha and civility. Let the country do anything it likes after renouncing the path of civility; our duty is only to see that it does not follow untruth while talking of truth and does not commit violence while talking

[1] *Vide* Vol. XV, pp. 243-5.

[2] *Vide* Vol. XXI, pp. 462-5.

of non-violence. Bardoli has observed those conditions well enough, and so have I. By acting thus, both have served the people and I personally have proved my fitness as a servant. By admitting errors, the people will rise higher, not fall lower.

Truly, it is God Who has saved our fair name. I should have taken a warning from the Madras incidents. I should also have done so from the letters I received from our opponents and from non-co-operators. I did not take the warning; but, then, if a person who enjoys God's kindness does not get warned by a sign, God warns him by beat of drum and, if he does not understand the warning even then, He warns him by thunder and lightning and by a downpour of rain. By doing a duty which requires no great effort, we have escaped big dangers.

If we have had to bend, to retreat, it is in order that we may advance. A person who strays from the path must first return to the point where he left it. After he has returned to it, his progress will be resumed. That is to say, we, who were slipping down when the Working Committee passed its resolution, began to rise again after that.

But this did not satisfy me. I, therefore, felt it necessary to undertake further atonement. My agony had begun the moment telegrams about Gorakhpur were received. But it was necessary that I go through bodily suffering as well. Considering the magnitude of my error, I should not have contented myself merely with a five days' fast. I wished to fast for 14 days. But I let it be five days. If this atonement is insufficient, I shall have to pay the balance sooner or later, along with compound interest. Anyone who repays his full debt in time saves himself from having to pay a greater amount later.

Atonement should not be advertised. But I have publicized mine, and there is a reason. My fast is atonement for me but, for the people of Chauri Chaura, it is a punishment. The punishment inflicted by love is always of this nature. When a lover is hurt, he does not punish the loved one, but suffers himself; he bears the pangs of hunger and hits his own head. He is unconcerned whether or not his loved ones understand his suffering.

But I have also made my fast public by way of warning to others as well. I have no alternative left to me. If a non-co-operator deceived me—and I regard almost the whole of the country as a non-co-operator—he may have my body. I fondly believe that the country wants me to live. If that is so, by undertaking bodily suffering I suggest to the country that it should not deceive me. If it likes, it may well disown me after re-

jecting the condition of non-violence. But, so long as it accepts my services, it will have to accept non-violence and truth.

This time I have been content with a fast of five days. If, however, the people refuse to take the warning, five days may become fifteen and fifteen become fifty and I may even lose my life.

I am writing this article on the third day of my fast[1]. I am perfectly clear in my mind that the Hindus, the Muslims, the Parsis, the Christians and the rest will get swaraj only by following the path of non-violence and it is by following the same path that they will serve the cause of the Khilafat and get justice in regard to the Punjab. It was accepted at the Congress session and in the Khilafat conferences. If, despite this, we give it up, we shall be fighting not for our dharma, not for God, but for *adharma* and for Satan.

We should not follow the bad example of others, not even that of Gazi Mustafa Kamal Pasha. "If a short man runs with a tall one he may not die, but he will certainly fall ill" is a true saying. Even a wise man acts in accordance with his nature, and so does the rest of the world. What, then, can one gain by coercion? I speak the truth when I say that India will never come to rule an empire through physical strength. It is doing violence to her nature to expect her to win anything through such strength. By her very nature, India is a lover of peace. That is why, whether she knows it or not, she has gone crazy over non-violent non-co-operation based on truth. No one came forward to follow the bad example of the mad men of Ahmedabad and Viramgam. No one, likewise, will imitate the example of the mad folk of Chauri Chaura. Such madness is not in India's nature, it is only a disease. On the other hand, Mustafa Kamal Pasha succeeded with his sword because there is strength in every nerve of a Turk. The Turks have been fighters for centuries. The people of India have followed the path of peace for thousands of years. We shall not discuss at the moment which people did the better thing. Both violence and non-violence have a place in the world. The *atman* and the body, both succeed. Whether eventually the *atman* wins or the body, this is not the occasion to consider. If we wish to discuss it, we may do so after we have won swaraj. Let us, at present, employ the easiest means to gain it. India's nature cannot be changed in a moment. I am convinced that those who

[1] Which commenced on February, 12

wish to free the country with the help of the sword will need ages to succeed in their effort.

If even the Muslims of India try to follow in the footsteps of Mustafa Kamal Pasha, they will taint the fair name of Islam. Islam attaches the utmost importance to peace. Patience is far better than anger, than the use of physical force. The people of India have followed peace and truth for a long time. Let them win swaraj this very day by adopting them again; if they discard these, they had better remain slaves. One cannot in the same moment proceed towards both east and west. The path followed by the West is one of violence and atheism; it looks like it for the present at any rate. The path followed by the East, it has long been proved, is one of peace, dharma and of faith in God. The centre of the West at the present day is England. That of the East has been India since time immemorial. The world thinks that England rules an empire and India is her chief maid-servant. Our present effort is to win deliverance from this slavery. If this land of Bharat wishes to end her slavery, she can do so only with the help of her old weapons of non-violence and truth.

There is at the present time not a single country on the face of the earth which is weaker than India in point of physical strength. Even tiny Afghanistan can growl at her.

With whose help does India hope to fight with England? Japan's? If it fights with the help of Kabul, or of some other country, it will have to accept the slavery of that country. Hence, if the country wishes to be free in this generation, it can count on no help other than God's. And God protects only those who follow truth and non-violence. Thus, the divine warning from Gorakhpur wants us to understand this if we wish to see our dreams come true: We must cultivate the spirit of non-violence.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 19-2-1922

178. WHAT ABOUT THOSE IN JAIL?

A gentleman has written a long letter to me from which I take the following:[1]

There is another letter expressing exactly similar views. I am sure others, too, have felt this doubt. What wonder if they have? But such doubts show that these doubting Thomases have not yet understood the significance and the beauty of the struggle. The charge against Pandit Malaviya has been levelled simply out of ignorance. Panditji had no hand at all in the suspension of civil disobedience. I resolved on it as soon as I heard in Bardoli about the Gorakhpur incident. I even wrote letters to that effect from Bardoli. I consulted colleagues and decided to convene a meeting of the Working Committee. Thereafter I went to Bombay. There is nothing surprising if Panditji also wants the same thing. But the decision was taken, independently of him, by the Working Committee and me.

Now let us turn to its merits. Is it right for us to try to get the prisoners released even by breaking our pledge? Not to give up truth even if, in consequence, we lose a kingdom and a throne, even if we sacrifice our family and our life—that is real satyagraha. If we secure the prisoners' release by forsaking truth, they themselves will feel ashamed. They wish to be released only after swaraj has been won. They want to be released with honour. They have gone to jail in order to suffer, looking upon this suffering as happiness and upon happiness outside jail as suffering. If, therefore, the step we took seemed right otherwise, we could not have refused to take it out of consideration for the prisoners.

Moreover, could we have secured their release by going on with civil disobedience? The power we had to get them released was the power of our non-violence. Bardoli could show its strength only if peace was preserved elsewhere in the country. Non-violence and violence cannot go hand in hand. Night and day cannot exist together. Thus, in whatever way we look at the matter, we reach the same conclusion, that we had no choice but to suspend civil disobedience.

[1] The extract is not translated here. The correspondent had asked whether Pandit Malaviya felt no concern for the many leaders and thousands of non-co-operators who were in jail, and why he was trying for a settlement while they were still in prison.

That does not mean that we have nothing to do now. If a Kshatriya does not succeed along one path, he looks for another, a straight one. From the point where he discovers that he has gone astray, he returns to the original spot and again tries his strength. We have to do the very same thing. No one will forget the prisoners.

I know the anguish in Panditji's soul. He is as keen to get the prisoners released as we are. He, too, wants to get them released without loss of honour to the country.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 19-2-1922

179. MY NOTES

To the People of Bardoli

You have done well. It is not for any fault of yours but because of Gorakhpur that civil disobedience has been suspended. However, as we all belong to India, Gorakhpur's crime has its effect on us too.

To a soldier, it is all the same whether he is asked to fight or to stop fighting. He goes forward or stops as he is ordered. The people of Bardoli should stop as the Working Committee has ordered them and prove themselves true soldiers by immediately paying up the revenue.

Civil disobedience may be suspended, but satyagraha is never suspended. It should be the very breath of our life. Hence, we should honour the resolutions which the Working Committee has passed in order that we may remain wedded to truth and to prove that we are so wedded.

Although the people of Bardoli were impatient to start civil disobedience, they did indeed have their shortcomings. I want you to overcome these and make yourselves more fit for offering civil disobedience.

During my stay in Bardoli, I saw that the *Kaliparaj* communities live almost in a state of slavery. It is the duty of the advanced communities to bring them out of their state of ignorance. They will deserve being called advanced communities only if they do so. The spinning-wheel should be introduced into the homes of the *Kaliparaj* communities. Their children should all attend national schools and they themselves should be given some general education.

I want the people of Bardoli to fulfil all the conditions laid down by the Congress and so make themselves more fit [for civil disobedience].

Only the *Kaliparaj* communities drink. You should go and meet them in their homes, talk to them with love and persuade them to give up drinking. In order that they may do this, they should be given milk, buttermilk or sweet water.

You can establish *panchayats*[1] this very day and settle your disputes among yourselves. You can improve your schools and give all-round education to your children there. You can add to your income and secure economic freedom by introducing the spinning-wheel in every home and training up weavers and carders in each village, and with only the profits from these activities you can run your courts and your schools, carry on propaganda against drinking and promote swadeshi.

The Congress has also pointed out to you the way to do all this. One means is for every man and woman to become a member of the Congress, and another is for all of you to contribute one per cent of your last year's income to the Tilak Swaraj Fund.

You can win a good measure of freedom by working in this way, and now you will be regarded as fit to offer civil disobedience only if you can win that freedom in a planned manner.

To Every Gujarati

What applies to the citizens of Bardoli applies to all Gujaratis. The idea behind suspending civil disobedience is to make ourselves more fit for it. We should, therefore, earnestly take up the constructive programme laid down by the Congress.

I know that the Kheda district of Abbas Saheb, which has been full of enthusiasm, will be greatly disappointed. Those who were getting ready for individual civil disobedience will now find it painful to pay up the taxes. They can, however, prove themselves true soldiers only by not looking at the matter in that light and, instead, by paying up the taxes and devoting themselves to constructive work. We can now see that it is more difficult to persuade everyone to become a member of the Congress and collect from him one per cent of his last year's income than to make him agree to go to prison. When we have completed all these tasks, not only Bardoli but the whole of Gujarat may start civil disobedience.

[1] Representative bodies looking after the affairs of a village

To Citizens of Ahmedabad and Surat

National civil disobedience has been suspended but a golden opportunity lies before you. You have a local grievance. You can give a good proof of the mettle of the people in your city. The Government appointed the Committees[1] against your wishes. Personally, I have been much grieved by your fellow-citizens coming forward to serve on them. This, however, should cause no disappointment. They will not be able to function without the co-operation of citizens. No children, of course, will attend the schools run by the Committees unless you send them there. Nor need you pay taxes against your wishes. Let there be, on the one hand, the Committees appointed by the Government against your wishes and, against them, let there be your city's *mahajan*. People will then know what support the Committees have.

You can carry on this work with the utmost civility and in a perfectly peaceful manner. After discussing matters with the Committees, take up all the responsibilities which you can shoulder and leave those which you cannot. I am eager to watch a civilized competition between the two. There is no doubt that even if one party takes care not to overstep the limits of propriety, the other, too, will have no choice but to act in like manner. If, therefore, the citizens work without ever using harsh language, they will certainly win. The first duty of the residents of these cities is to see that not a single one of the national schools passes out of their control. For this, enthusiastic workers and funds are all that is needed. If we cannot find these, we are bound to be defeated.

Satyagraha by Dhasa Durbar

Desai Gopaldas is the Durbar[2] of a town called Dhasa in Kathiawar. The people of that place lead a very happy and simple life. The relationship between the Durbar and his subjects is as cordial as between father and son. The movement for swadeshi, the removal of untouchability and similar activities are proceeding in Dhasa with great vigour. Being a *Patidar*[3], however, Shri Desai could not restrain himself when Abbas Saheb took charge of the Kheda district; he left the management of affairs in Dhasa to his wife and plunged into the movement in Kheda. Everyone has seen the correspondence between him and the

[1] For the circumstances which led to the Government action, *vide* "Municipalities in Trouble", 15-12-1921.

[2] Ruler of a small principality

[3] A community in Gujarat, consisting chiefly of peasant-farmers

Commissioner. Everyone of his letters bears testimony to his spirit of satyagraha. The nation will advance only through such sacrifices. The atmosphere in Japan changed overnight when the nobles offered their lands and all their other possessions for the service of the people. The poor also understood the importance of that sacrifice and all engaged themselves in national work. Similarly, when a large number of Durbars and zemindars in India start making sacrifices for the people, the resulting union between the rich and the poor will be a sight for the world to see. Today, it is the poor and those belonging to the middle class who are chiefly carrying on the non-co-operation movement. There is even some danger for the country in this. The somewhat delicate situation in which we find ourselves today will also end if the upper classes take full part in the movement. This requires courage and a Kshatriya spirit. Shri Desai has displayed these. I hope that others will take a lesson from his example.

The Case of Govindji Vasanji

Shri Govindji Vasanji, the proprietor of the well-known sweets-shop of Bombay, is in jail. I wanted to comment on this case earlier, but could not do as I did not have the relevant papers. I have just got them.

Shri Govindji will have to enjoy rest in jail for six months. I welcome the sentence all the more for being one of hard labour. It is my experience that those sentenced to simple imprisonment do not really serve a term of imprisonment. Those sentenced to hard labour alone can do so. The former are likely to get bored, while for prisoners undergoing rigorous imprisonment, time passes happily. The mind can turn the prison into a palace; on the other hand, if it constantly dwells on thoughts of imprisonment, it could make prison a place of misery. Anyone who finds prison-life hard is no non-co-operator. Mirabai welcomed the cup of poison as nectar.[1] Holding a cup of poison in his hands, Socrates addressed to his dear pupil a discourse on the immortality of the soul which the world will ever cherish. His gentle language bears testimony to the fact that there was no trace in his heart of any ill will or anger for the warder who gave him the cup or the judge who sentenced him to take poison. The history of the world provides many such instances.

[1] Her husband, incensed at her spending most of her time in devotion to Shri Krishna in the company of sadhus and mendicants, is said to have sent her a cup of poison, wanting her to end her life and stop bringing discredit to him and his family.

It is not only in regard to political offences that non-co-operators are to refrain from taking part in court proceedings. They may not defend themselves in courts from which they have decided to keep away even if they are charged with base crimes. The misfortune lies in having committed a crime, not in the fact that the world regards one as guilty. Many sinners conceal their sins from others and, passing for eminent religious leaders, live a burden to the world; such persons win no great reward in life. We look upon them as impostors.

We do not regard everyone who has been sentenced by a court as a criminal; on the contrary, all who have had experience of courts know that many innocent persons are punished and the guilty often escape punishment. As a lawyer, too, I have come across many such instances. Going to a court is like playing a game of *chopat*. For some, the dice may turn up favourably, for others, unfavourably. There is no reason to believe that they alone are worthy men who are favoured by the dice. Every player of *chopat* will readily recall instances in which the player always got the wrong number up, and failed to get the right number despite his most anxious efforts. It was not because of lack of skill in gambling on their part that the Pandavas lost while Duryodhana won.[1] Poor Yudhisthira spared no efforts. The Pandavas, however, were destined to attain immortal fame, to prove afresh that dharma always involved suffering. They were, therefore, defeated. But the world reveres the defeated Pandavas.

Shri Govindji's world consists of his friends. What do his friends think about him? I have not yet met a single friend of his who believes him to be guilty. Even now I see before me his face bathed in tears. When I did not even know that he might be prosecuted or that some action might be taken against him, he came to see me in order to remove any suspicions that I might have and, with tears in his eyes, told me that he had taken no part whatever in inciting anyone. "You will certainly believe that I, who often spend my time with Parsi friends and who owe my money to Parsi patrons, would at least have the sense to realize that I would be guilty in the eyes of the world and of God, were I to incite anyone against Parsis." These are the words he uttered on that day, in a voice choked with emotion. He related much else in the same strain and convinced me of his innocence.

[1] Yudhisthira, the eldest of the Pandavas, played against Duryodhana guided by Shakuni, Duryodhana's maternal uncle, and lost successive games with increasingly heavy stakes till he had forfeited their share of the kingdom and their personal liberty. The story is told in the *Mahabharata*.

I believe that he would have been acquitted if he had defended himself. Some able lawyers had offered to take up his case, but his brave mother refused their services. "My son is a satyagrahi. I know that he is innocent. It is possible that he may go to jail if he does not defend himself. However, he would bring shame upon me and upon our family by breaking his pledge. I do not want him to be defended." By arguing thus, that brave mother saved her son. Shri Govindji might perhaps have succumbed had it not been for his mother's courage and her blessings. But he chose to go to jail and so kept his pledge. There have not been many such instances in which non-co-operators did not defend themselves though charged with offences which would cast a slur on their good name. Shri Govindji Vasanji merits congratulations. I look upon his example as one which deserves to be followed by others.

No one should ask why, if I believe that Shri Govindji would have been acquitted if he had defended himself, we should refuse to take part in court proceedings and why people should not be free to defend themselves when charged with non-political offences. It is because of such temptations that falsehood, deceit, etc., have so far prospered in the world. No one has asserted that British law-courts never give justice. But is there any Indian who does not know that it is almost impossible to get justice in these courts when the case has any political implications? Tilak Maharaj strove hard to vindicate his reputation. At that time, we did not consider it wrong to defend ourselves in courts; on the contrary, it was the right thing to do. Tilak Maharaj, however, did not succeed. In the Punjab, Lala Harkishan Lal and others poured out money like water in order to pay lawyers; could they save themselves? Again, we know that Lala Lajpat Rai, Chitta Ranjan Das, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and others are completely innocent, and also that they could not have saved themselves even if they had engaged eminent lawyers. It is for this reason that, where the Government is blind in its intoxication of power, it is one's dharma to sacrifice even the few benefits that one may derive from it. Law-courts are one of the strong pillars which sustain a government. In ordinary circumstances, people may even accept the help which this pillar can give, but thoughtful people should not be tempted by such help.

To "Bhatia" Sisters and Brothers

A *Bhatia*[1] gentleman writes as follows:[2]

[1] A business community in Kutch

[2] The letter is not translated here.

The *Bhatias* have not spared themselves in serving the nation. Being well-to-do, they have contributed large sums. Some *Bhatia* sisters have been giving their time and serving the country very well. However, the rich still seem to find it difficult to adopt khadi. They have no reason for this. Those who are sincerely filled with zeal for service of the country will render whatever service is necessary. There is no other service as valuable as helping the swadeshi movement, that is, plying the spinning-wheel and using khadi, This dharma, though easy to follow and free from all risks, is very important in its results. It will not at all seem unusual if the rich in the country follow the dharma of wearing khadi. One reads in English history that the British people, including the nobles, gave up the use of lace and such other things which were imported from outside and for years carried on with thick, coarse cloth made in England itself. Anyone who realizes that khadi alone can end starvation in the country, can preserve the virtue of her women and can prevent famines—will such a person ever use foreign or mill-made cloth? I hope that *Bhatia* brothers and sisters will give up their indifference and whole-heartedly embrace the dharma of wearing khadi and plying the spinning-wheel.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 19-2-1922

180. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU[1]

BARDOLI,
February 19, 1922

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I see that all of you are terribly cut up over the resolutions[2] of the Working Committee. I sympathize with you, and my heart goes out to Father[3]. I can picture to myself the agony through which he must have passed but I also feel that this letter is unnecessary because I know that the first shock must have been followed by a true understanding of the situation. Let us not be obsessed by Devdas's youthful indiscretions. It is quite possible that the poor boy has been swept off his feet and that he has lost his balance, but the brutal murder of the constables by an

[1] Sent to Jawaharlal through his sister, as he was then in jail; *vide* the following item.
[2] Of February 11 and 12
[3] Pandit Motilal Nehru

infuriated crowd which was in sympathy with non-co-operation cannot be denied. Nor can it be denied that it was a politically-minded crowd. It would have been criminal not to have heeded such a clear warning.

I must tell you that this was the last straw. My letter[1] to the Viceroy was not sent without misgivings as its language must make it clear to anyone. I was much disturbed by the Madras doings, but I drowned the warning voice. I received letters both from Hindus and Mohammedans from Calcutta, Allahabad and the Punjab, all these before the Gorakhpur incident, telling me that the wrong was not all on the Government side, that our people were becoming aggressive, defiant and threatening, that they were getting out of hand and were not non-violent in demeanour. Whilst the Ferozepur Jirka incident[2] is discreditable to the Government, we are not altogether without blame. Hakimji complained about Bareilly. I have bitter complaints about Jajjar. In Shahajanpur too there has been a forcible attempt to take possession of the Town Hall. From Kanouj too the Congress Secretary himself telegraphed saying that the volunteer boys had become unruly and were picketing a High School and preventing youngsters under 16 from going to the school. 36,000 volunteers were enlisted in Gorakhpur, not 100 of whom conformed to the Congress pledge. In Calcutta Jamnalalji tells me there is utter disorganization, the volunteers wearing foreign cloth and certainly not pledged to non-violence. With all this news in my possession and much more from the South, the Chauri Chaura news came like a powerful match to ignite the gunpowder, and there was a blaze. I assure you that if the thing had not been suspended we would have been leading not a non-violent struggle but essentially a violent struggle. It is undoubtedly true that non-violence is spreading like the scent of the otto of roses throughout the length and breadth of the land, but the foetid smell of violence is still powerful, and it would be unwise to ignore or underrate it. The cause will prosper by this retreat. The movement had unconsciously drifted from the right path. We have come back to our moorings, and we can again go straight ahead. You are in as disadvantageous a position as I am advantageously placed for judging events in their due proportion.

May I give you my own experience of South Africa? We had all kinds of news brought to us in South Africa in our jails.

[1] Of February 1, 1922

[2] The shooting of December 23, 1921

For two or three days during my first experience I was glad enough to receive tit-bits, but I immediately realized the utter futility of interesting myself in this illegal gratification. I could do nothing, I could send no message profitably, and I simply vexed my soul uselessly. I felt that it was impossible for me to guide the movement from the jail. I therefore simply waited till I could meet those who were outside and talk to them freely, and then too I want you to believe me when I tell you that I took only an academic interest because I felt it was not my province to judge anything, and I saw how unerringly right I was. I well remember how the thoughts I had up to the time of my discharge from the jail on every occasion were modified immediately after discharge and after getting first-hand information myself. Somehow or other the jail atmosphere does not allow you to have all the bearings in your mind. I would therefore like you to dismiss the outer world from your view altogether and ignore its existence. I know this is a most difficult task, but if you take up some serious study and some serious manual work you can do it. Above all, whatever you do, don't you be disgusted with the spinning-wheel. You and I might have reason to get disgusted with ourselves for having done many things and having believed many things, but we shall never have the slightest cause for regret that we have pinned our faith to the spinning-wheel or that we have spun so much good yarn per day in the name of the motherland. You have *Song Celestial* with you. I cannot give you the inimitable translation of Edwin Arnold, but this is the rendering of the Sanskrit text. "There is no waste of energy, there is no destruction in this. Even a little of this dharma saves one from many a pitfall." "This dharma" in the original refers to Karma Yoga, and the Karma Yoga of our age is the spinning-wheel. I want a cheering letter from you after the freezing dose you have sent me through Pyarelal.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

A Bunch of Old Letters, pp. 23-5

181. LETTER TO VIJAYALAKSHMI PANDIT

[BARDOLI,
February 19, 1922]

MY DEAR SARUP[1],

If you think that the above[2] can give the prisoners in Lucknow any solace, please read it to Jawaharlal when you see him next. Do tell me otherwise how things are shaping there. Some one of you is I hope coming to Delhi. Ranjit sent me one of father's letters to you to read.

Yours,
BAPU

[PS.]

Pyarelal tells me, letters addressed to you are likely to be delayed; hence this is being sent through Durga.

A Bunch of Old Letters, pp. 23-5

182. TELEGRAM TO DEVDAS GANDHI

BARDOLI,
February 20, 1922

DEVDAS GANDHI
CONGRESS COMMITTEE
GORAKHPUR

CERTAINLY COME DELHI IF POSSIBLE.[3]

BAPU

From a photostat : S.N. 7945

[1] Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit; sister of Jawaharlal Nehru

[2] The preceding item

[3] Gandhiji was about to leave for Delhi after his five-day fast, to attend the A.I.C.C. meeting there to be held on February 24 and 25.

183. LETTER TO CHAIRMAN, A.I.C.C.

BARDOLI,
February 22, 1922

TO
THE CHAIRMAN OF THE WORKING COMMITTEE
OF THE ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE, DELHI

SIR,

At the meeting of the Working Committee held at Surat on 31st January last, the following resolution was passed:

> The Working Committee records its firm conviction that dissemination of correct news about Indian political situation in foreign countries is absolutely essential[1] and refers to Mahatma Gandhi all the correspondence on the subject of foreign propaganda now with the Working Secretary, with a request that he should prepare a definite scheme in that behalf at an early date so as to enable the next meeting of the Working Committee to consider it.

Having considered the resolution and the papers forwarded to me by the Secretary, I beg to report as follows:

In my opinion it is not only undesirable but it may prove even harmful to establish at the present stage any agency in any foreign country for the dissemination of correct news in such country about the political situation in India, for the following reasons:

First, because it would distract public attention and instead of making the people feel that they have to rely purely on their own strength, it will make them think of the effect of their actions on foreign countries and the support latter can render to the national cause. This does not mean that we do not care for the world's support, but the way to gain that support is to insist upon the correctness of every one of our actions and rely upon the automatic capacity of Truth to spread itself.

Secondly, it is my experience that when an agency is established for any special purpose, independent interest ceases to a certain extent and what is distributed by the agency is previously discounted as coming from interested quarters.

[1] In December 1920 it was decided to suspend foreign propaganda and to wind up the British Congress Committee and its journal *India*, published from London; *vide* Vol. XIX, p. 182.

Thirdly, the Congress will not be able to exercise effective check over such agencies, and there is great danger of authoritative distribution of wrong information and wrong ideas about the struggle.

Fourthly, it is not possible at the present moment to send out of India any person of importance for the sole purpose of disseminating news in foreign countries, for such men are too few for the internal work.

I am therefore of opinion that the work of publishing the Congress Bulletin should be better organized, if necessary, by engaging a special editor for the purpose and by sending the Congress Bulletin regularly to the chief news agencies of the world. The editor should be instructed to enter into correspondence with these newspapers or news agencies which may be found to interest themselves in Indian questions.

It is my firm opinion based upon experience gained through the conduct of the journals I have edited in South Africa and here that the more solid the Congress work and the sufferings of the Congress men and women, the greater the publicity will the cause attain without special effort. From the exchanges of letters and correspondence that I receive day by day from all parts of the world in connection with the conduct of *Young India*, I observe that never was so much interest taken in Indian affairs throughout the world as it is today. It follows that the interest will increase in the same proportion as the volume of our sufferings. The very best method of disseminating correct information about the political situation, therefore, is to make the Congress work purer, better organized and to evoke a greater spirit of suffering. Not only is curiosity thereby intensified, but people become more eager to understand the inwardness and the exact truth about the situation.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,
M. K. GANDHI

Young India, 9-3-1922

184. NOTES

An Excellent Choice

In selecting Sardar Kharak Singh as the successor to Aga Mahomed Safdar as President of the Provincial Congress Committee, the Congress Committee has made an excellent choice. It could not have done better. In honouring Sardar Saheb the Committee has honoured itself. The election of Sardar Kharak Singh is also a delicate compliment paid to the Sikhs for their bravery, sacrifice and patriotism. Nowadays the office of President of a Congress Committee, a Khilafat Committee or a Gurdwara Committee is no sinecure. Prosecution for some offence or another under the ordinary or extraordinary laws imposed by the Government upon the people of India almost follows as a matter of course in many provinces. With the exception of a few provinces, some office-bearers of the various Committees have contributed their quota to His Majesty's hotels. I congratulate Sardar Kharak Singh, therefore, upon his courage in taking up the reins of office at this stormy period of the nation's career.

Satisfactory for Both Parties

The imprisonment of leaders seems to satisfy both the Government and the public. It is obvious that they satisfy the Government, otherwise they would not have performed the thankless task of imprisoning leaders. They believe that thereby they will be able to suppress the non-co-operation movement. It is equally obvious that the people are satisfied with these imprisonments because the movement, wherever they take place, is making headway. The latest instance comes from Nellore. Although this place was doing steady work it was not pulsating with vitality as it must be doing now. An esteemed worker writes:[1]

> . . . here too the authorities have been co-operating with the people to push up our movement. Recently, they have rendered us a distinct service by awarding a year's rigorous imprisonment to the President, Secretary and three other members of the District Congress Committee. The Secretary is Mr. Ram Reddy, your host, when you last came to Nellore. He belongs to the most influential family of the Reddy community and his prosecution has carried our gospel to far-off nooks and corners which would have otherwise been impenetrable . . . .

[1] Only excerpts reproduced here

what respect for his revered father, Govind Malaviya, when he simply could not resist the voice of conscience, courted imprisonment in spite of Panditji's wish to the contrary.[1] The public will be pleased to have the following translation of the letter Panditji wrote to Govind Malaviya who has sent a copy to me. The original is of course in Hindi.

> With blessings to Govind. May you live long.
>
> I have received your letter. I am sorry I could not acknowledge it earlier because of my distractions. I am not displeased with you. Please be quite at ease on this score. I certainly did not approve of the picketing of the Modern High School. A school is not like an abode of sin or a case distributing poison such that it would be justifiable to picket it so as to prevent children from going there, but both you and Krishna were quite right in going to the public meeting and giving to the audience the message of the Congress. The policy adopted by the Government is altogether improper. I am hoping that it will be reversed. Do keep yourself perfectly happy. Mr. Gandhi sent me the letter you addressed to him about your imprisonment.

The foregoing is dated the 13th January.

The following was sent by Panditji to Krishna Kant Malaviya bearing the same date:

> I am sorry I have been so busy that I could not write to you or to Govind these many days. I am writing now at 11 p.m.
>
> You were perfectly right in addressing the meeting. Do not allow your mind to be oppressed with any idea that I disapproved your having done so. I said at the All-India Congress Committee (or rather at the Subjects Committee) meeting at Ahmedabad that if the Government would not withdraw the notification declaring Congress volunteers "unlawful associations", such volunteers would be justified in disregarding the notification and in going to jail for it.
>
> The Conference which I have convened along with others will take place to-morrow. The enclosed letter will show you the object of the Conference. Mr. Gandhi is here and so are Sir Sankaran Nair, Sir Visveswarayya and many others. We have had many hours of preliminary discussion today. I expect some good will come out of it.
>
> Keep yourself perfectly cheerful. Do not let any of your fellow-sufferers be under the impression that I had any hand in the alteration of your sentences from rigorous into simple imprisonment for six months. I did not complain to anyone about your sentences, though I did feel pained at the brutality of the sentences.

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 12-1-1922, under the sub-title "The Malaviyas".

> I intended to see you both in the jail on my return to Allahabad. But now that you have been removed to Agra, I may not be able to see you for some time. However, that is of little consequence. There is very heavy work before me during the next few months which will gratify your heart. More hereafter.

In sending me a copy of the letter Govind remarks that the circular letter convening the Conference was not delivered to Krishna Kant. He also asked me not to publish the two letters without Panditji's permission. As both the letters I considered to be of public interest, I felt that they should be printed, and having obtained the necessary permission I have shared them with the public. To me both are precious letters. They are an illustration of what a family life should be. There is mutual toleration between the different members of the same family and perfect independence retained by and given to the younger ones. What is more, the letters reveal the nobility of Panditji's character. If he is not in jail today it is not because he is afraid of it but because he has not yet seen his way clear to it. Who that is in intimate touch with him does not know that he is borne down with anxiety and torn asunder by an eternal conflict of duty? I have often felt that if he was carried away to prison it would be a positive deliverance for him from constant anxiety and worries attendant upon a public life such as his.

I have reproduced the letters in order to plead for general toleration on the part of non-co-operators. I want the readers to share with me the belief that though Panditji has a record of public service unequalled by any living Indian, there are men among the Independents and the Moderates who find themselves estranged against us, not because they are weak but from a stern sense of duty. If we would only cultivate the necessary spirit of humility, charity and toleration towards our opponents and will not impute unworthy motives, I know that we would win many over to our side who are today ranged against us because of our intoleration. When a majority becomes intolerant it is feared, distrusted and in the end detested, and very properly so. If non-co-operators have, as I believe they have, the vast masses with them, surely it behoves them to be tolerant, kind and respectful towards the minority even whilst they retain their own view-point as stubbornly as ever. Intoleration is weakness and justifies the charge often brought against us that the movement, although it is not intended to, does engender hatred. I hope the two letters I have reproduced will put non-co-operators on their guard.

The Gorakhpur tragedy was nothing but a forcible illustration of intoleration. We often forget that one of our duties consists in converting even the police and the soldiery to our views. We will never do so by terrorism. The mob inhumanity to the police has added to the corruption that is rampant amongst them and has now called forth the reprisals which shock us. Let us bear in mind the fact that a corrupt government and a corrupt police presuppose the existence of corruption among the people who submit to government and police corruption. After all, there is considerable truth in the statement that a people deserve the Government that they have. It does not need a religious belief in the doctrine of non-violence to make us see that we have to win the Police and the Military, largely consisting of our own countrymen, over to our side by kindness, toleration and even submission to their brutality. Surely, in a majority of cases they know not what they are doing.

Essence of Civil Disobedience

A friend, a Congress official, writes from Simla:[1]

> . . . certain members, belonging to different Congress organizations, have found out certain novel methods of disobeying law by staging certain plays which have been proscribed by the Government, for instance *Zakhm-i-Punjab* which was staged sometime ago in Multan and very recently in Simla, resulting in arrests in both the cases. Now may I ask your opinion about this form of disobedience practised before the date fixed in the resolution of the All-India Congress Committee, viz., 15th January 1922? Further, were the actors in these plays justified in informing the Government in a spirit of defiance beforehand that they were going to stage a proscribed play and by such action inviting arrests?
>
> Furthermore, I will draw your attention to the stormy literature which is issuing forth from Delhi and other places and is being recited by small boys and by certain irresponsible volunteers containing matter which is obviously inconsistent with the principle of non-violent non-co-operation. May I ask if this kind of propaganda instead of proving helpful will not bring about mischievous results?

The staging of the play was certainly not justified if it was done before the 15th January. It was also not justified if it was done without the consent of the Provincial Congress Committee. Every form of civil disobedience was subject to the previous sanction of the local Congress Committee. The staging of the play was also unjustified if the play itself was calculated needlessly to excite

[1] Only excerpts reproduced here

passions and to induce hatred. Assuming that all the conditions I have named were fulfilled, the managers were quite right in giving previous information to the Government in a dignified manner, because the essence of civil disobedience is that it is public and made specially known to those interested in arresting.

As to the "stormy literatue", it is a sad thing that pamphlets such as the writer alludes to are being published and so largely patronized. The writer has mentioned two such booklets. I am, however, not printing the names. Some other correspondent sends me one of the booklets also for my edification and advice. The title as well as the contents are objectionable and breathe nothing but hatred. It is our duty to bring every wrong to public notice, but there are ways and ways of doing the thing. No point is gained by putting things offensively. The offence contains in the fact itself. To embellish such facts is to detract from the demerit, and at the present moment when people are under the pledge of non-violence, publication of such literature is highly reprehensible. It spreads anger and makes the task of offering civil disobedience more and more difficult.

I Have Lost All Credit

A friend from Lahore without giving his name sends me the following thundering note:[1]

> On Tuesday the 11th I read the *Tribune* and the resolutions therein, passed at the emergency meeting of the All-India Congress Working Committee. . . .
>
> The people are of this opinion that you have turned your face and become fickle-minded. They will co-operate with the Government without any hesitation and join the ceremony of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. . . .
>
> Some merchants are under the impression that you have removed all the restrictions from all liquor shops and *videshi* cloth.
>
> Truly speaking, each and every one in Lahore city is holding meetings . . . and . . . are condemning the action of the All-India Congress Committee.
>
> I now for my sake ask you these questions:
>
> 1. Will you now give up the lead of this movement? If so, why?
>
> 2. Will you be good enough to let me know why you have given such instructions to all Provincial Congress Committees? Have you given an opportunity to Pandit Malaviya for a round table conference for a settlement, or has Pandit Malaviya agreed to embrace your movement in case the Government has not turned true to its words?

[1] Only excerpts reproduced here

3. Grant a compromise is arranged and the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs are redressed and in the case of swaraj the Government may only extend the reforms, will you be satisfied with that or continue your activities till you have got the full dominion status?

4. Suppose no decision is arrived at. Will Pandit Malaviya and all others who are connected with this conference come to your side or will their fate remain in the balance just as now?

5. In case no decision is arrived at, will you give up the idea of civil disobedience, if there is danger of violence?

6. Is your intention now to disband the present Volunteer Corps and enlist those who know spinning and wear hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar?

7. Suppose violence has made its appearance when you have started your mass civil disobedience, what will you do at that time? Will you stop your activities at the very moment?"

There is much more criticism in this letter than I have reproduced. The writer tells me that the people are so disgusted that they now threaten to become co-operators and are of opinion that I have sold Lala Lajpat Rai, Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das, Pandit Motilal Nehru, the Ali Brothers and others and tells me that if I give up the leadership there are thousands who will leave this world by committing suicide. I may assure the citizens of Lahore in particular and the Punjabis in general that I do not believe what is said of them. I used to receive such letters even during the Martial Law days because of the suspension of civil disobedience, but I discounted all the news and on my reaching the Punjab in October[1], I found that I was right in my analysis of the Punjab mind and I discovered that there was no one to challenge the propriety of my act. I feel still more confident of the correctness of the decision of the Working Committee, but if it is found that the country repudiates my action I shall not mind it. I can but do my duty. A leader is useless when he acts against the promptings of his own conscience, surrounded as he must be by people holding all kinds of views. He will drift like an anchorless ship if he has not the inner voice to hold him firm and guide him. Above all, I can easily put up with the denial of the world, but any denial by me of my God is unthinkable, and if I did not give at this critical period of the struggle the advice that I have, I would be denying both God and Truth. The telegrams and letters I am receiving from all parts of the country thanking me for my decision—telegrams from both non-co-operators and co-operators—confirm my belief

[1] 1919

that the country appreciates the decision and that the Lahore writer has given undue prominence to some heated bazaar talk which was bound to take place after the Bardoli decision which all of a sudden disturbed all previous calculations. I can understand the effect of the first shock, but I am also sure that when the people begin to analyse the implications of non-violence, they will come to no other conclusion than that of the Working Committee.

And now for the questions of the correspondent:

1. I am not likely to give up the lead of the movement unless I have a clear indication that the people want me to. One method of giving that indication is an adverse vote of the Working Committee or the All-India Congress Committee.

2. I assure the public that Pandit Malaviyaji had absolutely no hand in shaping my decision. I have often yielded to Panditji, and it is always a pleasure for me to yield to him whenever I can and always painful to differ from one who has an unrivalled record of public service and who is sacrifice personified. But so far as the decision of suspension is concerned, I arrived at it on my reading the detailed report of the Chauri Chaura tragedy in the *Chronicle*. It was in Bardoli that telegrams were sent convening the Working Committee meeting and it was in Bardoli that I sent a letter[1] to the members of the Working Committee advising them of my desire to suspend civil disobedience. I went thereafter to Bombay at the instance of Panditji who, together with the other friends of the Malaviya Conference, undoubtedly wished to plead with me for a suspension and who were agreeably surprised when I told them that so far as I was concerned my mind was made up, but that I had kept it open so that I could discuss the point thoroughly with the members of the Working Committee. The suspension has no reference to a round table conference or to any settlement. In my opinion, a round table conference is bound to prove fruitless. It requires a much stronger Viceroy than Lord Reading has proved to be to perceive the situation in the country and then to describe it correctly. I certainly feel that Pandit Malaviyaji has already come into the movement. It is not possible for him to keep away from the Congress or from danger, but the Bardoli decision was arrived at purely on its merits and I could not have been shaken from the original purpose had I not been unnerved by the Chauri Chaura tragedy which was the last straw.

3. Nothing short of a full Dominion status is likely to satisfy me personally and nothing short of complete severance will satisfy

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Members of Working Committee", 8-2-1922.

me if the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs remain unredressed, but the exact form does not depend upon me. I have no clear-cut scheme. It has to be evolved by the people's representatives.

4. At the present moment there is no question of a settlement. Therefore, the question as to what Panditji and all others will do is premature if not irrelevant. But assuming that Panditji holds any conference and that its resolutions are ignored by the Government, Panditji and others will act as all self-respecting men do in such circumstances.

5. I can never give up the *idea* of civil disobedience, no matter what danger there is of violence, but I shall certainly give up the idea of *starting* mass civil disobedience so long as there is a certain danger of violence. Individual civil disobedience stands on a different footing.

6. There is no question of disbanding any Volunteer Corps, but the names of those who do not conform to the Congress pledge have certainly to be removed from the list if we are to be honest.

7. If we have understood the essential parts of non-violence, we can but come to one conclusion that any erruption of widespread violence—and I call the Chauri Chaura tragedy widespread for the purpose—automatically stops mass civil disobedience. That many other parts of the country have nobly responded to the spirit of non-violence is good, but it is not good enough to continue mass civil disobedience even as a most *peaceful* meeting is disturbed if one man obstructs or commits violence. Mass civil disobedience for becoming successful requires a non-violent environment. The reason for restricting it to one single small area is to prevent violence elsewhere. It, therefore, means that mass civil disobedience in a particular area is possible when the other areas passively co-operate by remaining non-violent.

More Written Newspapers

The Sikh friends have come out with the *Azad Akali* both in Gurumukhi and in Urdu. Their effort is more readable and more artistic even than the Gauhati paper which I praised only the other day. Every sheet is so clear. Then there is the *Assam Congress Bulletin,* a weekly just started at Tezpur. This is purely in English. The print is not so clear as in the *Azad Akali*. I do not get the time to go through all these newspapers, but I hope that the editors of these written newspapers take special care in the selection of news, that they do not put in a single fact which cannot be fully substantiated and that they do not indulge in criticism that is calculated to excite hatred, seeing that such newspapers

cannot be controlled by any Government in the world, so long as there are people ready and brave enough to write them. They must be specially restrained in the choice of language. It would be terrible if written newspapers were to indulge in undisciplined language. So long as the country is under the spell of non-violence, every word uttered or written in anger or malice retards our progress.

BAN ON KHADDAR CAPS

It was a pleasure to me to receive the following from Maulvi Zafarulmulk Alavi of Lucknow who is at present undergoing imprisonment in the Fatehgarh Jail. The reader may not even remember that he was among the earliest victims. His arrest had created a sensation as it was unexpected. A man of literary tastes, he was living in practical retirement. He was fearless and truthful in his writings. Hence his arrest. From his letter the reader will see with what scrupulous care he is discharging himself in the jail. Like so many other non-co-operation prisoners, he is helping the authorities in preserving jail discipline. Let the letter[1] speak for itself:

> I have purposely refrained from writing to you during the last 15 months that I spent here, as I was thoroughly satisfied with my lot. . . .
>
> There have, however, arisen some points in connection with the jail life of non-co-operators which I should like to bring to your kind notice. . . .
>
> The other point is rather serious. Two non-co-operators who were lately made simple prisoners and are therefore allowed to put on their own clothes, have been prohibited from wearing the Gandhi cap. . . .
>
> I spoke to the officer concerned and was assured that personally he was not particular about it. In fact he had merely carried out the wishes of the District Magistrate. . . .
>
> According to the jail regulations, all simple prisoners wear their own clothing . . . Thus it is clear that this prohibition is only an innovation of very recent date and is simply obnoxious and humiliating. . . .
>
> The Inspector General of U.P. Jails is about to visit this jail very shortly and the matter will be referred to him who is likely to settle it satisfactorily, if his discretion has not already been tied by an order of the local Government. In that case, of course, it will be our duty to disobey the order at all costs.

The difficulty, however, about khaddar caps is one of principle on which there can be no surrender. The simple imprisonment prisoners have the right to wear their own dress. It is therefore

[1] Only excerpts reproduced here

an insult to them to deprive them of their caps. I hope that the Inspector General has solved the difficulty as expected by the Maulvi Saheb.

It is no pleasure to have to fight the Government in the jails. They might be treated as neutral ground where the animosities may be buried. Death closes many a controversy. Imprisonment is civil death. Is it not possible to keep the political animosities outside the prison walls? But I know it is too much to expect this Government, which lives on pretensions of decency, to observe the laws of the game even behind the iron bars. Liberty will be all the dearer for the price that is being exacted of us.

As I write these bitter lines, the voice within me asks whether I am doing justice to the Government! Do I not know that the prisoners are having a royal time of it in the Agra Jail? But the answer swiftly comes—all jails are not Agra Jails. Whatever is given is extorted. Whatever can possibly be denied is withheld. I hear Pandit Motilalji saying to me: "What is my comfort worth if my next-door neighbour, who does not happen to be a well-known barrister, does not get the creature comforts that I get!"

SIND PRISONERS

Mr. Virumal Begraj who is a great social reformer and the soul of Sukkur writes while being taken from Sind to an unknown destination:[1]

It is the greatest revelation that workers are being replaced as fast as they are arrested. It is the surest sign of the vitality of the movement.

DR. KICHLEW—NO. 776

Dr. Kichlew's letter[2] reproduced elsewhere will be read with mingled satisfaction. We can envy his gain in weight, his buoyancy, but we cannot congratulate the Bombay Government on the treatment of political prisoners.

Dr. Kichlew rightly calls attention to the fact that when in the Punjab he was charged with a more serious offence, he had decent treatment, whereas now when the charge is in reality nothing, he and his fellow-prisoners are treated as common felons. But the interest of the correspondence will centre in Col. Wedgwood's[3]

[1] The letter, not reproduced here, mentioned that, while the writer and others had been sentenced to imprisonment, their "young friends" were carrying on all national activities.

[2] Not reproduced here

[3] A British Labour leader and Member of Parliament who visited India in December 1920 and attended the Nagpur Session of the Congress.

frank letter which Dr. Kichlew has sent for publication. "Gandhi-ism" referred to by Col. Wedgwood is nothing but a return to truth and simplicity. Truth must always be simple. And nothing that is simple and truthful admits of violence. "Gandhi-ism" is a revival of the old maxims which are common both to the East and the West. "Live and let live" is what non-co-operation stands for. The modern motto is hideous exclusiveness based upon violence. Equality and Fraternity are mere lip-phrases and mutual intercourse is not based on mutual love but is on mutual repulsion and consequent preparedness to do violence. It is, however, too early yet to talk of "Gandhi-ism". India has to stand the test and vindicate the supremacy of non-violence over violence before the ideal can be approximated.

A Correction

In *Young India* of 2nd February I reproduced a letter from Pandit Arjunlal Sethi's son regarding Pandit Sethi's treatment in the jail.[1] I have now learnt that the son was misinformed and that no brandy or eggs were administered to Arjunlalji. He is reported also to be properly fed and clothed. Whilst correspondents have generally sent most accurate accounts, too much care can never be exercised in transmitting news. Correspondents should always err on the side of under-statement. Exaggeration not only discredits us but it produces a contrary effect on the opponent, whereas accuracy of statement brings home the guilt to the person accused, whether he confesses it or not. I have invariably found that a truthful exposure of wrong has always brought about some mitigation. I have found also that exaggeration has generally increased its intensity. Truth softens even an untruthful person. Untruth can only harden him, for he is a stranger to truth.

Rather Free than Sober

Just as I am writing these notes, my assistant puts into my hand a cutting from the *Leader* containing the text of Pandit Gopinath Kunzru's letter describing in the calmest manner possible what befell him and his friend when they were purchasing in Agra brandy from a liquor shop for outward application for a patient. The volunteers would not allow them to take the brandy in spite of all the assurances of *bona fides* given by Pandit Kunzru. This is not only not non-violence but is unadulterated violence. Peaceful picketing does not mean that so long as no physical violence is

[1] *Vide* "Notes", 2-2-1922, under the sub-title "Interference with Religious Liberty".

used, any kind of pressure could be exercised. The volunteers, if they had remained true to their pledge, would have allowed safer passage to Pandit Gopinath and his friend. The picketers' duty is merely to warn drinkers against the vice of drink, not molest them or otherwise prevent them, if they will not listen. If we may force temperance upon the people believing it to be good for them, the English administrators and their Indian supporters are certainly performing an analogous operation. They too force the present system on us well believing that it is good for us. If the swaraj volunteers may, therefore, take such liberties as they have undoubtedly taken in respect of Pandit Gopinath Kunzru, they are seeking not to change the *system* but to change *masters*. I would rather have India to be free than sober if freedom has to be sold to buy sobriety.

Foreign Cloth

On the one hand instances such as the foregoing make one cautious about even liquor picketing. On the other, complaints have reached from two places regarding the stopping of the picketing of foreign cloth shops by the Working Committee. All suspensions are to depend upon the decision of the All-India Congress Committee. But whilst one wishes the total prohibition of the use of foreign cloth, if the picketing is at all forcible, I for one cannot possibly vote for it. The clearest issue before the country is whether we are to have non-violence in thought, word and deed or whether we are to have mixed activity. But I need not speculate further, because the fate will be decided by the time these notes reach the subscribers.

From far off Silchar

Here is another letter[1] from Babu Tarun Ram Phooken from Silchar Jail which he this time calls Sadhana Ashram.

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[1] Not reproduced here. Phooken had expressed his growing conviction that unless people were prepared to suffer without the desire for retaliation, they would fail in their fight.

185. A GREAT STATEMENT

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's statement to the Court has been just received by me. It covers thirty-three closely-typed foolscap sheets. But it is worth reading. The original is naturally in the Maulana's polished Urdu. The English translation is not bad, but one could wish it was possible to get a better translation. The statement has much literary beauty. It is elaborate and eloquent. It is bold and uncompromising but subdued. A sarcastic vein runs through the whole of it. It is an eloquent thesis giving the Maulana's views on the Khilafat and nationalism. I hope that it will be possible to procure printed copies of the statement. I would advise the Maulana's secretary to have the statement carefully revised.

As I laid down the statement I felt more clearly than ever the necessity of boycott of law-courts. But for the boycott, we could never have evolved the fearless strength that we have. Instead of the noble declarations of the President, Lalaji, Panditji, we would have had pettifogging lingual quibbles which cannot raise a nation. Without the boycott we could never have had the Maulana's statement which in itself constitutes good political education.

What a change between 1919 and 1922—nervous fear of sentences and all kinds of defences in 1919; utter disregard of sentences and no defence in 1922! In 1919 the nation could have done no otherwise; in 1922 it could have done no less without deserving execration of the world. The effect of the boycott is not to be measured by the number of suspensions of practice. The true measure is to be found in the departure of the halo that only two years ago surrounded the courts of law. They still remain the haunts of money-changers and speculators. They are no longer repositories of national or even individual liberty. That is to be found in the stout hearts that the nation is fast developing.

The Maulana's statement is hardly meant for, though addressed to, the Court. It is meant for the public. It is really an oration deserving penal servitude for life. Well might the Maulana laconically exclaim after his one year's rigorous imprisonment: "This falls far short of what I was waiting for."

The following extracts[1] which I have culled from the statement will enable the reader to form his own conclusions.

Young India, 23-2-1922

[1] Not reproduced here

186. MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD

Begum Abul Kalam Azad sends me the following telegraphic message[1] by letter post :

> Judgment has been delivered today in the case against my husband, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. He has been sentenced to only one year's rigorous imprisonment. This is astoundingly less than what I was waiting for. . . . I make bold to inform you that I offer my humble service to fill up the gap caused by his absence in the rank of national workers in Bengal. All those activities which he performed will still continue to be carried on normally. . . . Before this, during his last four years' internment, I have gone through a first test, and I am confident that in this my second trial, I will with God's grace come off triumphant. . . . From today I will discharge all the duties connected with the Bengal Provincial Khilafat Committees with the assistance of my brother. My husband has asked me to convey to you his loving and reverent greetings and the following message: "At the present juncture both the sides—the Government and the country—are wholly unprepared for any compromise. The only duty before us is to prepare ourselves. Bengal will, in the next stage, also retain the lead which it has established today. Kindly add the name of Bengal to that of Bardoli Taluka. And if any time comes for a settlement, do please not give to our release the importance which is unfortunately being attached to it today. Have the terms of settlement fixed with the single end in view of our national aspirations, unconcerned with the question of our release."

I have not yet received the telegram although the letter of advice tells me that it was sent both to Ahmedabad and Bardoli. I am able to give the telegram to the public only because the Secretary of the Bengal Provincial Khilafat Committee has very kindly sent me a copy by letter post at the instance of the Begum Saheba. It is a matter of no small comfort that ladies occupying the highest station in life, are coming forward one after another to step into the breach created by the withdrawal of male national workers. I tender my congratulations to Begum Abul Kalam Azad for her having offered to take her share in the public work. The readers will take to heart the message of the Maulana. It is perfectly true that neither the Government nor the country is today prepared for any compromise. The Government will not be till we have

[1] Only excerpts reproduced here

suffered long and suffered more. Bengal has certainly led in the direction. Bardoli has yet done little. Twice has it been baulked of its privilege by cruel Nature, but it is a matter of no consequence whether it is Bengal or Bardoli which leads, so long as we get rid of a system which, as is daily becoming more and more clear, is based upon terrorism. In the present mood of the country there is little danger of the vital interests being sacrificed, as the Maulana fears, to the momentary pleasure of securing the release of non-co-operation prisoners.

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187. SHAKING THE MANES[1]

How can there be any compromise whilst the British Lion continues to shake his gory claws in our faces? Lord Birkenhead[2] reminds us that Britain has lost none of her hard fibre. Mr. Montagu tells us in the plainest language that the British are the most determined nation in the world, who will brook no interference with their purpose. Let me quote the exact words telegraphed by Reuter:

> If the existence of our Empire were challenged, the discharge of responsibilities of the British Government to India prevented and demands were made in the very mistaken belief that we contemplated retreat from India—then India would not challenge with success the most determined people in the world, who would once again answer the challenge with all the vigour and determination at its command.

Both Lord Birkenhead and Mr. Montagu little know that India is prepared for all "the hard fibre" that can be transported across the seas and that her challenge was issued in the September of 1920 at Calcutta[3] that India would be satisfied with nothing less than swaraj and full redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs. This does involve the existence of the "Empire", and if the present custodians of the British Empire are not satisfied with its quiet transformation into a true Commonwealth of free nations, each with equal rights and each having the power to secede at will from an honourable and friendly partnership, all the determination and vigour of "the

[1] This is one of the articles for which Gandhiji was tried and sentenced in March 1922.

[2] 1872-1930; British lawyer, politician and scholar; Lord Chancellor and later, Secretary of State for India

[3] In the Special Session of the Congress

most determined people in the world" and the "hard fibre" will have to be spent in India in a vain effort to crush the spirit that has risen and that will neither bend nor break. It is true that we have no "hard fibre". The rice-eating, puny millions of India seem to have resolved upon achieving their own destiny without any further tutelage and without arms. In the Lokamanya's language it is their "birthright", and they will have it in spite of the "hard fibre" and in spite of the vigour and determination with which it may be administered. India cannot and will not answer this insolence with insolence, but if she remains true to her pledge, her prayer to God to be delivered from such a scourge will certainly not go in vain. No empire intoxicated with the red wine of power and plunder of weaker races has yet lived long in this world, and this "British Empire", which is based upon organized exploitation of physically weaker races of the earth and upon a continuous exhibition of brute force, cannot live if there is a just God ruling the universe. Little do these so-called representatives of the British nation realize that India has already given many of her best men to be dealt with by the British "hard fibre". Had Chauri Chaura not interrupted the even course of the national sacrifice, there would have been still greater and more delectable offerings placed before the Lion, but God had willed it otherwise. There is nothing, however, to prevent all those representatives in Downing Street and Whitehall from doing their worst. I am aware that I have written strongly about the insolent threat that has come from across the seas, but it is high time that the British people were made to realize that the fight that was commenced in 1920 is a fight to the finish, whether it lasts one month or one year or many months or many years and whether the representatives of Britain re-enact all the indescribable orgies of the Mutiny days with redoubled force or whether they do not. I shall only hope and pray that God will give India sufficient humility and sufficient strength to remain non-violent to the end. Submission to the insolent challenges that are cabled out on due occasions is now an utter impossibility.

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188. MILL CLOTH

If hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar, whether cotton, wool or silk is to be the order of the day, what is the place of mill cloth in the national economy, is the question often asked. If millions of villagers could receive, understand and take up the message of the spinning-wheel today, I know that there is no room for mill cloth whether foreign or Indian in our domestic economy and that the nation will be all the better for its entire disappearance.

This statement has nothing to do with machinery or with the propaganda for boycott of foreign cloth. It is purely and simply a question of the economic condition of the Indian masses.

But unless Providence comes to the rescue and miraculously and immediately drives the masses to the spinning-wheel as to a haven of refuge, the Indian mills must continue to supplement the khaddar manufacture for a few years to come at any rate. It is devoutly to be wished that a successful appeal could be made to great mill-owners to regard the mill industry as a national trust and that they should realize its proper place. The mill-owners cannot wish to make money at the expense of the masses. They should on the contrary model their business in keeping with the national requirements and wipe out the reproach that was justly levelled against them during the Bengal Partition agitation[1]. Even now complaints continue to come from Calcutta and elsewhere that Indian mills are charging for their dhotis more than Manchester although their dhotis are inferior to the Manchester. If the information is correct it is highly unpatriotic and such a policy of grab is likely to damage both the cause and the country. At the moment when the country is going through the travail of a new birth, surely it is wicked to charge inordinate prices and thus not merely to stand aloof from the popular movement but actually to be callously indifferent to it.

The mill-owners might also, if they will take a larger view of the situation, understand, appreciate and foster the khaddar movement and study the wants of the people and suit their manufactures to the new needs of the country.

But whether they do so or not, the country's march to freedom cannot be made to depend upon any corporation or groups of men. This is a mass manifestation. The masses are moving

[1] In 1905

rapidly towards deliverance and they must move whether with the aid of the organized capital or without. This must therefore be a movement independent of capital and yet not antagonistic to it. Only if capital came to the aid of the masses, it would redound to the credit of the capitalists and hasten the advent of the happy day.

Nor was it otherwise before. India's history is not one of strained relations between capital and labour. The conception of four divisions is as religious as it is economic and political. And the condition has not been affected for the worse by the admixture of Islamic culture which is essentially religious and therefore beneficial to the poor. Islam seems to forbid the hoarding of capital as it literally forbids usury.

And even at the present moment it is not possible to say that capital is standing out. It was the modest capitalist who subscribed so liberally to the Tilak Swaraj Fund. But it has to be admitted with pain that the bulk of the mill-owners unfortunately stood out. Manufacture of piece-goods is the largest industry in the country. It is time for it to make its choice. Will it . . .[1] it or will it drift?

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189. *NO END TO MY SORROWS*

The Manager of the *Lokamanya* has forwarded to me the following interview between the representative of that paper and M. Paul Richard. He asks me to publish it and to offer my remarks upon it. I do so not without great hesitation and reluctance, but often a public worker has no choice. He has to overcome reluctance as also hesitation. It was sorrowful for me to have to correct what was an honest but gross misrepresentation of my views about Shantiniketan.[2] There are some things which one holds sacred and which one does not care to discuss in public. The interview that I am now asked to publish adds to my many sorrows. Here is it:

> QUESTION: After the last postponement of civil disobedience at Bardoli, the number is increasing among the non-co-operationists who do not understand the mind of the Mahatma. What do you think about it?

[1] Some words are missing here in the source.

[2] *Vide* "Notes", 9-2-1922, under the sub-title, "Too Sacred for Publication".

ANSWER : Everything is easy to understand in the attitude of Mahatma Gandhi if one remembers that his true aim is not what people generally think, but what he has expressed to me a few days ago, saying, "I do not work for freedom of India, I work for non-violence in the world and that is the difference between me and Mr. Tilak. Mr. Tilak was telling me, 'I would sacrifice even truth for freedom of my country' but I am ready to sacrifice even freedom for the sake of truth." In the light of these words you can understand the reason of the actual postponement of national programme, until the spirit of violence has been shaken everywhere in India; that means probably until the end of the world!

The mind of Mahatmaji can be expressed in a word "Non-violence at any cost"; just as the mind of Mrs. Besant and of the Moderate party can be expressed by the motto "Law and Order at any cost"; and such is also the will of the Government. But the will of the national soul behind and above all is "At any cost a new Law and a new Order".

This will of the new spirit in India, Asia and all over the World is the only one which by any way is sure to triumph.

I had a rare time with M. Paul Richard. We had many happy hours together. I could see at once that our views of life were fundamentally different in some respects, but that did not matter in the slightest degree to me. We met each other as distant acquaintances. We parted as the best of friends and though it is now my lot to criticize what M. Paul Richard has said, my regard for his learning, for his humanity and his philosophy remains undiminished. But I cannot help expressing my deep regret that he should have related what was sacred conversation between him and me and that in an attenuated form. He makes me cut a sorry figure in that interview. It is not possible to deny the substance of it, and yet torn from its context and put in the language of M. Paul Richard it makes me look so utterly ridiculous. The Maharashtra party and I are endeavouring to understand each other. We are coming daily nearer. That party would rightly resent any reflection on my part upon the career or the character of one of the greatest of Indians and one who rules that party's hearts as no other man rules the hearts of any other set of men. M. Paul Richard and I were engaged in a deeply religious discourse. I was trying to give to him the fundamentals of my own faith. I was arguing upon the sharp difference that both he and I observed between us, and whilst I was elucidating my point I came upon the differences between the Lokamanya and myself in a reverent spirit. After many a frank chat with the Lokamanya I had come to see that on some vital matters we could never

agree. Drawing illustrations from his inexhaustible store of Sanskrit learning, he used to challenge my interpretation of life and frankly and bluntly would say, truth and untruth were only relative terms, but at bottom there was no such thing as truth and untruth just as there was no such thing as life and death. Whilst I could not resist the abstract presentation, I detected a flaw in its application to actual life and I put it before him in all reverence. In my opinion, we never misunderstood each other. At Sinhagad where both he and I were trying to take rest we came closer together.[1] I noticed that he was fearless and sincere in the enunciation of his views and he tried to live up to them. I could discover also the reasons for the marvellous hold he had on millions of his countrymen. I have claimed no superiority for myself. I only know that we fundamentally differed, but my respect for him grew with greater contact, and I believe that his affection for me also grew as time went on. The remarks, therefore, that were made to M. Paul Richard were made, I assure the reader, in no disparagement of the character of the illustrious deceased and I hope that the bald presentation of that difference in the interview will not in any way acerbate the members of the great Maharashtra party whose hearty co-operation in the national struggle I value so highly and in order to conciliate whom I go many a mile so long as I have not to sacrifice my principle.

M. Paul Richard's presentation of my views about non-violence is really a caricature. I have no doubt that he understands me in the manner in which he has represented me. There is undoubtedly a sense in which the statement is true when I say that I hold my religion dearer than my country and that therefore I am a Hindu first and nationalist after. I do not become on that score a less nationalist than the best of them. I simply thereby imply that the interests of my country are identical with those of my religion. Similarly when I say that I prize my own salvation above everything else, above the salvation of India, it does not mean that my personal salvation requires a sacrifice of India's political or any other salvation. But it implies necessarily that the two go together. Just in the same sense I would decline to gain India's freedom at the cost of non-violence, meaning that India will never gain her freedom without non-violence or through violence. That I may be hopelessly wrong in holding the view is another matter, but such is my view

[1] Tilak had a discussion with Gandhiji at Sinhagad on May 1, 1920; *vide* Vol. XVII, p. 376.

and it is daily growing on me. I have so often remarked that whatever may be true of other countries, India's salvation lies only through the path of non-violence. If M. Paul Richard had understood me correctly he would have pacified his interviewer by saying that I believed that India could gain her liberty quickly only through non-violence and that therefore so long as the country accepted my guidance the country would have to be satisfied with my limitations and therefore permit me to guide her so long as the country believed that, as it is circumstanced, it had no means open to her for gaining her end except by non-violence and truth. M. Paul Richard has made the position worse by remarking that if India's freedom depends upon non-violence it will never be attained. It passes comprehension how he could have omitted to take notice of the phenomenal progress made by the country in the direction of freedom. Indeed, I claim that India is substantially free today, she has found the way, she is asserting herself, she has thousands of her children—men and women —who have learnt the sovereign virtue of sacrifice without retaliation, and it is my certain conviction that if only workers will work out the constructive programme placed before them with industry and honesty, I have not a shadow of a doubt that we shall gain all the three ends in no time. I do not for one moment believe that the Congress workers cannot control forces of hooliganism that exist in the country. Only we have not tried whole-heartedly to gain control.[1]

Young India, 23-2-1922

190. OUR LAXITY

A reliable correspondent writes to me saying that in Allahabad and Benares the volunteers have been enlisted without regard to their qualifications. Hardly 50 could be found dressed in hand-spun khaddar from top to toe. Some more could be found wearing khaddar for outer covering, all the rest being foreign cloth. The same correspondent says that some of the volunteers do not mind an occasional drink and that they are not tested as to their belief in non-violence and that in many instances the local Congress officials have lost control over them. It has been officially reported that there are 96,000 volunteers enlisted in

[1] M. Paul Richard's reply to this article was published in *Young India*, 16-3-1922, under the title, "His Sorrow Is My Sorrow".

the United Provinces. If it is a fact that there are so many volunteers on the roll and that the vast majority of them do not conform to the Congress conditions, they are worse than useless. The complaints mentioned by me are formidable, yet as a matter of fact, I have not exhausted them all. The same news comes from Calcutta, again from a reliable source. My informant tells me that hundreds who have gone to jail know nothing about the pledge, are not dressed in khaddar, are not dressed even in Indian mill cloth but have gone to jail wearing foreign cloth, and that they have had no training in non-violence. A correspondent from Rohtak writes bitterly complaining that in many parts of that district the volunteers do not obey instructions and make the position of Congress officials most difficult and embarrassing.

If one-tenth of these complaints is true I fear that we have not been able to cope with the wonderful awakening and to bring under control all the new additions to the Congress organization. It is possible that it is nobody's fault that this is so. The Government precipitated a crisis by hurling the notifications about public meetings and volunteers at us. The challenge had to be and was taken up. New and inexperienced men found themselves clothed with office and they were called upon to deal with a crisis which would have taxed to its utmost the capacity even of the experienced leaders withdrawn from public guidance.

There is much to be said in favour of this argument. No one need therefore be blamed, but we must not blink the facts. On the contrary we must face them sternly, boldly and set our own house in order. No army in the world has yet marched to victory, which has not consisted of soldiers possessing the qualities expected of them. An army of peace has greater need to exhibit the qualities laid down for its soldiers. It would not do to retort that the standard is too high. A recruiting officer who takes recruits below the standard renders himself guilty of dishonesty, if he takes such recruits knowingly. All he can do is to report to the headquarters that he cannot get recruits on the conditions prescribed, but on no account will he be justified in departing from them.

The conditions laid down by the Congress were read by myself in detail to the whole audience last December in the Congress *pandal*.[1] They were exhaustively discussed by the All-India Congress Committee and the Working Committee and then they were explained by me to the delegates and visitors from the

[1] *Vide* "Speech at Congress Session, Ahmedabad–I", 28-12-1921.

different provinces at numerous informal discussions. The plea of impossibility of fulfilment cannot therefore be accepted. The delegates knew what they were about. They were nearly 6,000. They came to represent their respective constituencies and there should have been no difficulty about the fulfilment of the conditions.

I should personally be satisfied with 300 volunteers thoroughly understanding and complying with the conditions, but I should not care to lead a struggle with 30,000 volunteers who know nothing of and care less about the conditions. The reason is obvious. In the one case I have at least 300 stalwarts to support me, in the other case I have to carry a burden of 30,000 men, not volunteers, who are a drag upon me. The 300 would help me, would obey instructions, but 30,000 will certainly not carry out instructions and may throttle me. We must therefore once for all make up our minds that all the resolutions which are passed by the Congress Working Committee have to be fulfilled literally. They are part of a swift and practical programme upon whose due fulfilment rests the future of India, the redress of the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs and the attainment of swaraj. Resolutions by themselves mean nothing if they are not to be carried out in full. We used to complain when our resolutions which were in days gone by addressed to the Government were not carried out by it. Who is to complain when the resolutions voluntarily and deliberately passed by us are not carried out by ourselves? I, therefore, strongly advise all Congress and Khilafat organizations to see that they are strictly enforced in their respective jurisdictions. If they do not, it is they who will endanger the movement and no one else. It is for us to make or mar the future.

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191. PRISONERS IN DELHI JAIL

With the exception of one irrelevant paragraph I am giving the letter[1] as received without even removing the picturesque though inoffensive adjectives. It must be clear to any impartial observer that a mere denial by interested parties, however highly

[1] Not reproduced here. This letter from Hadi Hassan, Secretary, District Congress Committee, Delhi, described the maltreatment of non-co-operator prisoners in Delhi Jail, in reply to a Press *communique* issued on the subject by the Chief Commissioner, Delhi.

placed they may be, will not be enough to remove the bad taste in the mouth left by these revelations.

Young India, 23-2-1922

192. GOVERNMENT DENIALS

1. On Behalf of the Bihar Government

The Bihar Publicity Officer sends me the following for publication in reply to my statement in my rejoinder to the Government of India's reply to my manifesto addressed to H.E. the Viceroy:

> In the manifesto dated the 7th February issued by Mr. Gandhi from Bardoli, mention is made of certain acts of "lawless repression" by the Government, which in his opinion justify resort to civil disobedience. Among these nstances is the following item: "looting, admitted by the Bihar Government, of villages by an officer and his company without any permission from anyone". The reference is evidently to the Dhanaha Thana incident, and the plain implication of this statement is that the looting was carried out under the orders of the officer in charge of the police company and that this fact is admitted by the Bihar Government. The substance of the statement made by the Chief Secretary in the Legislative Council to which Mr. Gandhi evidently refers is as follows:
>
> "On the 27th December 1921, on receipt of information from Mr. Mackinnon, Manager of the Baikunthpur Factory, that certain villages were in a very disturbed state, the military mounted police marched through Pipariah, Bairatwa, Chanderpore and Sihulia. The allegations of looting in village Pipariah appeared on the finding of the District Magistrate to be entirely without foundation. Some looting, however, did take place in the other three villages. The District Magistrate was of opinion that the looting which occurred was in no way systematic but sporadic, a few *sowars* slipping down side-lanes and taking articles from owners. The Inspector in charge knew nothing about it till the villagers of Sihulia came up and complained, when the property was, under the orders of the Inspector, restored on the spot. The Inspector General of Police had been requested to take disciplinary action against those *sowars* against whom there was definite evidence of having taken part in looting, and the Sub-Divisional Officer, Bettiah, is to take cognizance of any offences that may be disclosed during the enquiry."
>
> The statement made by Government makes it clear that the published reports of the looting were much exaggerated and that such looting as took place was the act of individual *sowars*. It also shows that Government

will not countenance any breach of discipline like that of which the *sowars* were guilty on this occasion.

Mr. Gandhi's manifesto certainly tries to put a very different complexion on the whole affair.

I gladly publish the note, but I must confess that it carries no conviction to me. The substance of the statement of the Chief Secretary is not half as damning as the original which I have read and which appears in *The Searchlight* (27-1-1922). The cross-fire to which the Chief Secretary was exposed in the Bihar Council is a study in hedging and fencing. The Chief Secretary is unable to deny that the officer himself did not take part in looting. These villages of Champaran I know very well. They have no winding lanes. Looting does not cease to be looting when the looted property is restored. The admissions wrung from the Chief Secretary by the Councillors leave on the reader's mind the impression that there is more behind the admissions than appears on the surface. Let one add, too, that the officer and the *sowars* went in spite of prohibition against the mounted police parading without any magistrate accompanying them. No explanation is still forthcoming as to why the officer rode out with his *sowars* and what action has been taken against him for the breach of discipline which the Government have been compelled to admit. Let it be noted too that the villagers had nothing to deserve the looting expedition. As the summary admits "on receipt of information from Mr. Mackinnon, Manager of the Baikunthpur Factory, that certain villages were in a very disturbed state, the military mounted police marched through Pipariah, etc". I know what these marches mean to the villagers of Champaran. I am most anxious to be convinced that officialism has not reached the state of degradation which popular reports describe and which the Government are reluctantly obliged to admit in part or in full. But all my effort in that direction, I regret, has proved fruitless.

Young India, 23-2-1922

193. RESOLUTION AT A.I.C.C. MEETING, DELHI

February 25, 1922

The following resolution was passed on the 25th ultimo at the session of the All-India Congress Committee held at Delhi.

The All-India Congress Committee having carefully considered the resolutions passed by the Working Committee at its meeting held at Bardoli on the 11th and 12th instant, confirms the said resolutions with the modifications[1] noted therein and further resolves that individual civil disobedience whether of a defensive or aggressive character may be commenced in respect of particular places or particular laws at the instance of and upon permission being granted therefor by the respective Provincial Committee; provided that such civil disobedience shall not be permitted unless all the conditions laid down by the Congress or the All-India Congress Committee or the Working Committee are strictly fulfilled.

Reports having been received from various quarters that picketing regarding foreign cloth is as necessary as liquor-picketing, the All-India Congress Committee authorizes such picketing of a *bona-fide* character on the same terms as liquor-picketing mentioned in the Bardoli resolutions.

The All-India Congress Committee wishes it to be understood that the resolutions of the Working Committee do not mean any abandonment of the original Congress programme of non-co-operation or permanent abandonment of mass civil disobedience but considers that an atmosphere of necessary mass non-violence can be established by the workers concentrating upon the constructive programme framed by the Working Committee at Bardoli.

The All-India Congress Committee holds civil disobedience to be the right and duty of the people to be exercised and performed whenever the State opposes the declared will of the people.

Note: Individual civil disobedience is disobedience of orders or laws by a single individual or an ascertained number or group of individuals. Therefore, a prohibited public meeting where admission is regulated by tickets and to which no unauthorized admission is allowed, is an instance of individual civil disobe-

[1] *Vide* footnotes to "Working Committee's Resolutions at Bardoli", 12-2-1922.

dience, whereas a prohibited meeting to which the general public is admitted without any restriction is an instance of mass civil disobedience. Such civil disobedience is defensive when a prohibited public meeting is held for conducting a normal activity although it may result in arrest. It would be aggressive if it is held not for any normal activity but merely for the purpose of courting arrest and imprisonment.

Young India, 2-3-1922

194. TEST FOR AHMEDABAD AND SURAT

The residents and city-fathers of Ahmedabad and Surat[1] are about to be put to a test. How far we have imbibed the spirit of public service, to what extent the citizens look upon one another as members of a family, in what degree they possess the qualities of firmness, respect for their pledged word, self-sacrifice and perseverance—all this will be seen now.

If all the representatives of the citizens display these qualities, there can be only one result—the committees nominated by the Government will remain idle for want of work.

There can be no better proof of the hollowness of the Reforms than the supersession of these two big municipalities. Had the city-fathers acted arbitrarily, it might perhaps have been right to deprive them of their power; but in this case the Government knows, and so does the Indian "minister" for Local Self-Government, that the citizens and their representatives are of one mind in this dispute, that both wish to preserve the autonomy of the Education Department. Despite this, the Government and "our" minister have superseded the municipalities, instead of taking whatever remedies are available under the law, and have thereby flouted public opinion. It has been thus proved that the Reforms confer altogether arbitrary powers on the Government and that the people would derive no benefit at all from them.

But, instead of considering the advantages or disadvantages of the Reforms, it would be more appropriate here to consider what is in the interest of the citizens. The pledge which they have taken should be honoured. If they accept defeat on such simple issues, I would say, and the world too would say, that they are not fit for local self-government. As our fitness for swaraj is to be

[1] *Vide* "My Notes", 19-2-1922, under the sub-title "To Citizens of Ahmedabad and Surat".

proved by winning it, so also it is to be proved by displaying our capacity to preserve it. We shall be considered strong only if we can defend the country against external aggression. Only that person's body is considered healthy who remains healthy even when attacked by germs from outside. Education is the central issue in this battle. The citizens may or may not protect their rights in other matters; but they would be completely defeated if they accept defeat in the field of education. If this happens, it will be proved beyond doubt that the citizens have not learnt to think or act independently. If the people give in, that would prove that the representatives, being resourceful, went on fighting the Government and the citizens enjoyed watching the fight, but that the latter did not bother in the least to think or act independently.

It is, therefore, the primary duty of the citizens of these two cities not only to retain complete control over their children's education, but also to put it on such firm foundation that no one should be tempted to go to a Government school.

We shall discover, if we make this attempt, that anything which is not done spontaneously will not last long. Only if the citizens are true non-co-operators will they refuse to send their children to Government schools. If they care for the quality of their children's education, they will put it on a sound foundation. Likewise, educated persons in Ahmedabad and Surat will give their services for teaching, the citizens will offer convenient accommodation for schools and meet various other requirements and thus demonstrate to the Government-nominated committees that they are ready for any number of sacrifices for the sake of their children's education.

We have to face the urgent problem of funds for this educational programme. It is my considered view that the citizens have the right to refuse to pay the educational cess they have been paying. Whether or not they insist on this right, it should not be difficult for the residents of Ahmedabad and Surat to collect the required amount. By collecting it, they will demonstrate their strength and unity. Money given for the purpose of education is no philanthropy. It is investment of the best kind. Parents will get full return on it. I hope that the residents of the two cities will manage all these things without delay. If Ahmedabad and Surat succeed in these tasks, there is not a shadow of a doubt that they will provide a splendid example for the rest of the country to follow. It cannot but have a profound effect on the kind of swaraj the country will have.

If these two cities can achieve this without rousing the least hatred or resentment and without violation of peace to the slightest extent, we shall have demonstrated effectively how non-violent non-co-operation should be carried on.

I should like the citizens to assert their independence in other matters also; however, it is my considered advice to leaders to move slowly and take every step after careful deliberation.

I hear it said that the citizens have lost heart because of the suspension of civil disobedience in Bardoli and the loss of control over the municipalities. If this be so, they have not understood the meaning of non-co-operation nor have they understood the nature of their own fight. In non-co-operation, resolutions such as those passed at Bardoli are quite normal. In a great war, one strategy after another is adopted and abandoned. The aim behind all is one and the same. It is sometimes as necessary to abandon a strategy as it may have been to adopt it. There is no room for defeat in a satyagraha struggle, whereas there is every possibility of one in an ordinary battle; but, even when defeated, the troops do not lose courage. We Indians have been accused of being unable to stand a defeat. Defeat in a single battle sees us running away in confusion. I cherish an earnest hope that India will give a lie to this accusation. As for the Bardoli resolutions, I do not regard them as signs of our defeat at all. I look upon them, rather, as sure signs of our regard for truth and our courage.

Moreover, the struggle in Ahmedabad and Surat is a local one. It must not be affected by the Bardoli resolutions. Why, again, should there be any disappointment because of the supersession of the municipalities? Our actions were deliberately intended to bring about this result. The underlying purpose of the struggle is to see that at every step the Government places itself in a false position. It is designed to expose its autocratic ways. The net result of the nomination of committees by it is that the municipalities of Ahmedabad and Surat are now completely in the non-co-operation camp. The citizens alone can now check their advance in that direction. It is true that we have lost control over a few buildings and other things. What does that matter? The representatives of the people can meet under a mango tree. It is not necessary for them to meet in granite buildings for transacting their business. The new committees cannot insist on getting the latrines cleaned against the will of the people; nor on lighting the streets. The citizens can demonstrate within one week that the committees can do only what they permit them

to do. I, therefore, see no reason for the least feeling of frustration. Such a feeling can only be a sign of our ignorance.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 26-2-1922

195. MY NOTES

IN THE CALCUTTA JAIL

Harilal Gandhi writes from the Calcutta Jail:[1]

The news which appeared in the papers, that the sentences of the prisoners in Calcutta Jail have been reduced by half, has turned out in many cases to be without foundation.

HOW CAN WE POSSIBLY PAY "CHOTHAI"?

The leading *Patidars* of Karamsad[2] had come forward to offer civil disobedience with such courage that they were prepared to be ruined. Now that they are required to pay up the revenue dues under the Bardoli Resolution, they feel unhappy. To add to this, the Government officials, in their vindictiveness, demand *chothai* which the *Patidars* simply cannot bring themselves to pay.

But did we ever expect any decency from the Government? Is it ever likely to miss an opportunity of victimizing people? Decency on our part consists in permitting them to have their revenge without getting angry ourselves. We should not even petition the officials to waive the demand.

To pay such fines is part of our atonement. If people are prepared to be ruined, what objection can they have to paying a fine?

But those who pay such fine may rest assured that, when we have swaraj or when there is a settlement, their fines will be refunded if they demand that they should be. I would particularly advise those from whom *chothai* is demanded that they should pay it up and keep an account of the payment.

The path of satyagraha has its own laws; it requires discrimination and readiness to suffer. We should not hope that we shall have our revenge on such officials when our turn comes. If anyone punishes us but we do not retaliate, the other person's

[1] The letter is not translated here.
[2] In Anand taluka, which was preparing to offer civil disobedience under the leadership of Abbas Tyabji

fund of hatred will be exhausted. It is a universal law that an action which meets with no reaction finally spends itself. One who has understood this law will never think of taking revenge.

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE IN JHARIA

I had told the delegates who had assembled for the Congress week that the people should not plunge into active civil disobedience in Jharia, and I had said that I would write a note on this in *Navajivan*. I beg forgiveness of these gentlemen for having forgotten to do so. The circumstances in Jharia are exceptional. There are thousands of workers there. Besides them, only well-to-do Marwari, Gujarati, Bengali and other business people who have dealings with them live there. To start active civil disobedience in this place will certainly mean arousing the working class. Even individual civil disobedience is likely to cause excitement among them. I have, therefore, given my emphatic advice against starting active civil disobedience in this place at present. To introduce civil disobedience among workers would be inviting trouble. In such places, therefore, activities like promoting the use of khadi, popularizing the spinning-wheel and carrying on propaganda against drinking should be greatly intensified and, since Jharia is a mine of wealth as much as, and because, it is a centre of coal mines, it should provide the money required for all the activities in Bihar. Ramjas Babu and other rich gentlemen of the place can give the fullest help in such work. If they solve the Bihar Provincial Congress Committee's difficulties about money, spread the use of khadi among workers, themselves spin and persuade the latter to spin and weave, see that they give up drinking and make them aware of their duties and then of their rights, I would think that they had fully served the cause of non-co-operation.

PLEADING IN AGENCY COURTS

A friend writes to ask me if it is true that I have expressed the view that every non-co-operator can practise in Agency courts. I have given such advice to no one. However, with reference to the cases of Shri Mansukhlal and Shri Manilal Kothari which have recently come up in Kathiawar, I have indeed said that they can defend themselves in Agency courts and engage counsel. Both of them are subjects of Indian States and are trying to uphold their own and others' rights in these States. They are not non-co-operators with regard to matters arising out of circumstances in Indian States. Hence, if they wish to take up the pro-

blems of these States they will have to be ready for fighting in courts and for similar steps, otherwise they will run the risk of having the worst of both the worlds.

This certainly does not mean that a lawyer who has joined non-co-operation may appear in cases in Agency courts or that a non-co-operator may himself resort to legal proceedings in them, nor does it imply that he can engage a lawyer in any matter arising out of his actions as a non-co-operator within the jurisdiction of an Agency; but it does mean that, if a non-co-operator has money claims in an Indian State, he can take the matter to a State court and engage a lawyer for the purpose. We are not offering non-co-operation against the Indian States or the law-courts there; hence dealings with the latter need not be avoided altogether.

But all such things are full of complications. Non-co-operators, therefore, should take care not to place themselves in such difficult situations. It is for this very reason that I have often said earlier that, for the present, it is not desirable for non-co-operators living in Indian States to get involved in local problems, otherwise they will run the risk of getting completely entangled in them. However, according to the present policy in regard to non-co-operation, I think there can be no objection to anyone who does not mind being so entangled or who involuntarily gets involved in such a dispute, fighting out the matter in a court of law.

The foregoing gentlemen have been arrested in connection with matters relating to Indian States and the Agency officer has attacked the rights of the subjects of Indian States. I see no objection to their taking legal steps in this matter. Though both of them are non-co-operators in British India, they have been arrested in Kathiawar and they can, therefore, get released on bail and defend themselves.

It may be objected that an Agency, too, is part of the British Empire. Someone may argue that what I have said seems reasonable enough so far as courts in Indian States are concerned, but that it is difficult to accept that position with regard to courts in the Agencies. There are two aspects of this. Just as the Agency is part of the British Empire, it is also part of the Indian States concerned. Agencies exist because Indian States exist. Hence, it is permissible for one to go to Agency courts in matters relating to Indian States,' but a person cannot defend himself, or get himself released on bail, if he had gone to the Agency to preach non-co-operation and was arrested for that reason. This is why I have

been advising people from the very beginning that non-co-operation should not be introduced in Indian States, that people should work there to promote only such activities as swadeshi which give no cause for objection, and these, too, from a purely economic and moral point of view, and consequently that we should have no Congress Committees, etc., in Indian States and that those who wish to join the Congress may get themselves enrolled in any Committee in British India.

There is a way of resolving all these difficulties in an unexceptionable manner. We shall never go wrong if we always follow it. If in any step we wish to take we are motivated by any kind of fear or self-interest—for instance the fear of imprisonment—we should not take that step. A non-co-operator must be fearless and unselfish; if he is truthful, non-violent, fearless and unselfish, he will make no mistake. He will consult his conscience and then go ahead unhesitatingly.

Instance of Opposite Kind

In the note above, we considered instances of conduct which might appear to be contrary to the principle of non-co-operation. A correspondent from Indore reports an opposite instance. He says that, at the time of the visit of the Prince of Wales to Indore, three gentlemen, Pandit Arya Datta, Sheth Chhotalal and Sheth Badrinarayan, all residents of Indore Cantonment, were ordered to leave the area. They disregarded the order and were arrested in consequence. They neither engaged lawyers nor defended themselves and are now undergoing sentence of simple imprisonment for a month. Thus, in this instance, people were arrested and imprisoned for offering non-co-operation as advised by the Congress. The same correspondent reports further that fourteen other volunteers have also been arrested. An athlete named Ramnarayan kept up his self-control even when beaten up by a soldier, though he had strength enough to fight back.

"Notion of Being Defiled Is Like a Superfluous Limb"[1]

An *Antyaj* friend from Amreli writes:

> There is intense contempt for *Antyajas* in the land of your birth. The less said about the evil of untouchability in Kathiawar, the better. I have been as far as Porbandar. There is less of it by one or two per cent in Rajkot, Bhavnagar and Amreli; but, on the whole there is much more of it in Kathiawar than in Gujarat.

[1] The line is attributed to Akha, a Gujarati poet of the 17th century.

What if it happens to be my land of birth? A man does not show that he is a good son by drowning himself in his father's well. As I quote this extract from the letter, I feel ashamed of the land of my birth. That Kathiawar, the home of a lover of God like Narasinh Mehta[1], which was witness to the excellence of Sudama's character, where Swaminarayan[2] preached his mission and Arjuna's chariot-driver[3] cast a spell over men and women, if the wise people of that very same Kathiawar regard *adharma* as dharma, cherish prejudices about touching and not touching as if they were sacred and hold human beings in contempt, can anything but degradation be the result?

If, however, I give up hopes about Kathiawar, I would have to give up faith in my own self. I have not forgotten the fact that young men from Kathiawar had undertaken to clean the latrines in Khadi Nagar.[4]

A number of young men there are engaged in serving *Antyajas*. The value of such service should be judged not by adding, but by multiplying, the numbers of the instances. If this is done Kathiawar will be absolved of the charge which is often levelled against it. The solution of this problem depends on the patience and civility of its young men and their spirit of religious earnestness. If they disregard propriety and criticize their elders disrespectfully, they will not succeed in propagating their views about ending untouchability. When young men scrupulously follow dharma in all other respects while regarding untouchability as contrary to dharma, they will not fail to have an impact on society.

MOTILAL TEJAVAT AND THE "BHILS"[5]

In order to look into this matter, Shri Manilal Kothari went at my request to Shirohi and other places. It seems from the reports received from him that Shri Motilal Tejavat has been working mainly to persuade the *Bhils* to give up drinking and flesh-eating. It is beyond doubt that his activities have brought about an awakening among the *Bhils*. There would have been no ground for criticism if he had stayed at one place so that the *Bhils* could meet him, instead of roaming around accompanied by groups of

[1] Who freely mixed with so-called untouchables in devotional gatherings

[2] Swami Sahajananda (1781-1830), founder of a *Vaishnava* sect called *Swaminarayana*

[3] Shri Krishna

[4] At the time of the Congress session in Ahmedabad in December 1921

[5] A tribe in Gujarat and Central India

them. I reproduce below the letter[1] he has sent to me through Shri Manilal.

This letter betrays ignorance about some matters. The British have nothing to do with the issue and the matter ought to have been brought to the notice of the States concerned in a proper manner. Shri Manilal says that in Palanpur, Danta and Shirohi States, he, Manilal, had received full co-operation from the authorities. Shri Motilal and the *Bhils* also listened to him and he was sure that they wished to carry on their work in a wholly peaceful manner. I hope that the *Bhils* will be satisfied if the States listen to their complaints and redress their grievances. Assuming that Shri Motilal has been at fault in some matters, both the Rulers and the subjects are likely to benefit if this is overlooked and the States take advantage of the good effects of his work among the *Bhils* and pay attention to improving their condition.

Picketing Foreign Cloth

The letter which I received from Jharia, reminding me of my promise to write about civil disobedience, contains an item of sad news also. The correspondent says that the merchants there have not kept their pledge of not importing foreign cloth. It seems that the value of a merchant's pledge is as low now as it was high in ancient times. Reports of the pledge having been broken in this manner have also come in from Calcutta. In these circumstances, one wonders what one should do if not picket the shops. I have no doubt whatsoever that we have a right to resort to peaceful picketing. I have been opposing such picketing because I know that picketing which is supposed to be peaceful is not always so. Moreover, I feel that picketing is improper till there is a general feeling against the use of foreign cloth. It is also possible that people will not tolerate the picketing of a practice against which public opinion has not been fully aroused. This is one side of the case.

The other side is that, where a pledge has been broken, we must have some effective means of putting to shame those who have done so and warning the people against them. There are two such remedies which can be employed with civility. The first is picketing and the second is breaking off social relations with the guilty party. The idea behind both is the same. Society has a right to sever connections with a merchant who refuses to honour

[1] Not translated here. It said that Tejavat had introduced satyagraha among the *Bhils* and this had displeased the authorities in the States. Neither they nor the British officials paid attention to his pleas.

a *hundi*[1] which has matured. Such boycott does not involve putting a person out of the caste or refusing one's services to him; it merely involves severing business connections. But such a step is not always feasible and so picketing remains the only practical and simple way. I am writing this on Tuesday, on the eve of the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee.[2] It is yet to be seen what it decides. I would, however, tell the citizens of Jharia that they have a right to resort to perfectly peaceful picketing if there has been a clear violation of the pledge. Before exercising the right, it is necessary that they should meet those gentlemen who have broken the pledge, plead with them and give them due warning. It should be borne in mind in regard to all restrictions that they are imposed in order to ensure preservation of peace. Where there is not the slightest danger of peace being violated, it is permissible to resort to picketing even though it has been disallowed. Who could stop a respected person like Ramjas Babu from picketing the shop of a merchant who has broken his pledge? Of course, this is on condition that even he may not do picketing with a band of one thousand volunteers. Where picketing is resorted to not with a view to intimidation but in order to make the person feel ashamed of himself, the pickets should be few and not many and should be, moreover, well-known persons of good character.

However, I humbly request all merchants to see that they do not put the people or Congress volunteers to the trouble, or oblige them to take upon themselves the responsibility of picketing. Foreign cloth is rapidly going out of use in the country and this has saved hundreds of thousands of rupees. Many thousands of these have found their way into the homes of the poor. How can they break their pledge for their selfish interests and obstruct a movement which is profitable both from the economic and religious points of view? How can they themselves be happy that their shops should have to be picketed? A merchant should compare himself to a chaste wife. Both should be ashamed of being guarded. Just as a chaste wife who goes astray inflicts a painful wound on society, similarly a merchant breaking his pledge strikes a violent blow at it. Will merchants not take part in this holy *yajna* even to the extent of carrying out their pledge?

[1] Draft or bill of exchange

[2] The A.I.C.C. met in Delhi on 24-2-1922.

WOMEN VOLUNTEERS IN AHMEDABAD

I have before me a report of the work done by women volunteers who are engaged in promoting trade in khadi in Ratanpole[1]. It contains a conversation which took place between them and merchants dealing in foreign cloth, and another with women customers.

The result of their conversation with women customers was that the latter went away without making any purchases and promised not to buy foreign cloth in future. They reasoned with the merchants, but failed to win them over. The latter tried to put off the volunteers : "We must dispose of what we have in stock; after that, we will not buy any more foreign cloth". Everyone knows that this means nothing. A person who decides that he will give up smoking or drinking after finishing the cigarettes in his pocket or the drink that is still left in the bottle will never succeed in giving it up. One can break oneself free only when one throws away the cigarette or the liquor in one's possession. A person who wants to dispose of his stock will never see that stock exhausted. Then again, one merchant argued: "Who will make good our losses if we stop selling now?" This betrayed lack of sense. What can we expect from anyone who is not prepared to put up with such a small loss for the sake of the country? Who makes good the loss when there is a fall in the demand, when the market is slack or when there has been a robbery? I do not understand what sacrifice is involved in giving up a trade which, we have realized, should be abandoned for the good of the country.

What, however, should the women-volunteers do in such circumstances? They should plead politely, say no harsh words but patiently argue about the advantages and disadvantages of the matter and, if they do not succeed even then, keep quiet and not provoke unpleasantness by arguing further. It is much better to put faith in the understanding and patriotism of customers who come to purchase small quantities rather than hope for anything from those who have large stocks of foreign goods.

"NAVAJIVAN" IS NOT BANNED

Last week, I published a report from a correspondent to the effect that the authorities in Veraval had banned *Navajivan*. Another correspondent writes to say that this report is without any foundation and that, in fact, he himself distributes *Navajivan* among the people and no one prevents him from doing so.

[1] A business street in Ahmedabad

ACCUMULATED STOCKS OF KHADI

The reader must have seen the "advertisement" which appeared in *Navajivan* about the Khadi Karyalaya of the Congress. It was felt afterwards that there could be no advertisements in *Navajivan* and that any exception to this rule would be improper, and so further insertions were discontinued. The Khadi Karyalaya has protested against this. I must make it clear that the *Navajivan* has charged no money for that insertion. Both parties are right. It is difficult to insert even unpaid advertisements, since we want to use all available space in the *Navajivan* for reading material. How is one to decide which goods to select for advertising? But then, it may also be said that *Navajivan* exists for the sake of khadi, and for this reason I want at the moment to give more importance to it than can be given merely by an advertisement. No stocks of khadi should remain unsold in any part of Gujarat. So long as there are still people in Gujarat who wear foreign cloth, or even mill-made cloth, how can we claim that it uses khadi? I, therefore, hope that merchants and consumers will buy up all the stocks of khadi lying with the Khadi Karyalaya and so enable it to get new stocks. Khadi for coats is priced at eight annas a yard and for shirts at seven annas a yard. I advise readers who can reduce this burden to write to the All-India Congress Committee and reduce it.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 26-2-1922

196. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

DELHI,
February 26, 1922

Mahatma Gandhi in the course of a Press interview made the following important statements:

He said that the proceedings of the All-India Congress Committee were a perfect study.

I am not in a position to divulge all that happened in that Committee; not that there is anything to hide or to be ashamed of. One thing was absolutely clear that there was deep disappointment and even strong resentment against the Bardoli resolutions[1].

[1] Of February 11 and 12

Coming as they did close upon the rejoinder[1] to the Government *communiqué*[2], it was difficult for the members to understand or appreciate the reason for a departure from the steps contemplated in my letter[3] to the Viceroy. There was even a suspicion, not audible but certainly very visible, that I was labouring under the influence of Pandit Malaviyaji. I was able to show that my own opinion was arrived at totally independently of Malaviyaji and before I met him after the Chauri Chaura tragedy. Personally nothing would please me better than to be able to confess that I had yielded upon any point to Panditji's persuasions. On this matter of non-co-operation and civil disobedience it has always been a matter of grief to me to differ from Panditji. However, I mention this merely to show the intensity of feeling.

It speaks volumes for the loyalty of the members of the All-India Congress Committee to the Congress and for the discipline observed by them that in spite of their bitter disappointment and resentment they subsequently and after a full debate substantially confirmed the Bardoli resolutions. I must confess that I myself do not like the wording of the covering resolution. It is unnecessarily explanatory; the definitions, the reiteration of Congress policy and civil disobedience seem to me to be out of place; but when it became a matter of soothing ruffled feelings and of avoiding misunderstandings and misinterpretations I felt that it was better to be tautological and verbose as the covering resolution undoubtedly is than to appear to be obscure or ambiguous.

For once I can generally endorse the interpretation put upon the Bardoli resolutions by Sir William Vincent. He is quite correct in saying that the Bardoli resolutions do not in any shape or form mean a reversal of the policy or the modification of the Congress programme of non-co-operation and that it is merely a suspension of mass civil disobedience, and a suspension, till further instructions, of other activities of an aggressive character. It could not be otherwise. The Bardoli resolutions were addressed to the people and were intended to be of a penitential nature and also to prove incontestably to the people who are in symapthy with the movement that the sympathy of those who believe in violence is not only not required but is held to be injurious to the cause.

I would however warn my critics and I know, some of them, although very friendly, have become very sensitive of late. I

[1] Of February 7
[2] Of February 6; *vide* Appendix II.
[3] Of February 1

warn such critics against reading into the covering resolution any radical modification of the Bardoli resolutions except in two particulars. One is the restoration of permission to resort to *bona fide* picketing of foreign cloth under direct supervision of local Congress committees, to be carried on by persons of known good character. Complaints were bitter against foreign cloth merchants as to their indifference to the growing popular dislike, even on the part of those who use it, for foreign cloth, as also to the breach of solemn promises made by these merchants that they would not import any more foreign cloth. The people have rightly resented the unpatriotic and selfish attitude of the merchants who in their desire to amass wealth have utterly disregarded the popular feeling against any further importation of foreign cloth into this country. It would be a grave mistake to suppose that this opposition to foreign cloth is based upon any ill will. Dislike of foreign cloth is a proof of national consciousness, of a supreme economic fact and this statement received additional support from the opposition that is growing against the use of cloth manufactured by mills of India. There can be no question of ill will against those who are engaged in the mill industry of India. But till the nation realizes, as I think it will, that the masses can as little afford to buy cloth manufactured in mills as it can afford to buy food cooked in hotels, it is impossible to withstand that unanimous demand for picketing foreign cloth shops. I can only hope that the merchants of India who have all these long years been engaged in a trade which has brought about the daily growing pauperism of the masses will rise to the occasion and even like the Japanese Samurai recognize the necessity of a little sacrifice. I consider the sacrifice of foreign cloth trade slight for the simple reason that the merchants can find a respectable living if they turn their attention to organizing the khaddar manufacture and the khaddar trade and thus render even peaceful picketing wholly unnecessary. If they would only co-operate I would love to divert the energy of the best men and women in the country from picketing foreign cloth shops to becoming expert spinners, weavers, and carders and manufacturers of khaddar as fast as they can.

The second modification is that the power of reverting to individual civil disobedience whether of a defensive or of offensive type has been again given by the All-India Congress Committee to the provinces. It does not therefore mean that the provinces are required immediately to resort to individual civil disobedience but it gives each province full powers to do so if circumstances required it and if the necessary non-violent atmosphere is present in that

province. Whilst the provinces have thus their autonomy which was granted to them in November last at Delhi[1] restored to them, I would strongly advise them not to exercise those powers without the greatest deliberation or with undue haste. Indeed I would advise them, unless circumstances render civil disobedience absolutely imperative, to take a little rest, and purge their volunteers' register of all the names of those who did not believe in every single detail of the requirements of the Congress pledge.

It would really add to the strength of the movement if the provinces before re-embarking upon individual civil disobedience would put their house in thorough order and ensure perfect non-violence, non-violence not merely in deed but in thought and word. Whilst it is perfectly true that the country as a whole has made remarkable progress in the cultivation of a non-violent spirit it cannot be denied that there is still great room for the improvement and that we are living in a state of perpetual suspense. The ideal atmosphere for civil disobedience, whether individual or mass, is undoubtedly an atmosphere of perfect calm. Civil disobedience must not be demonstrative. Each one who is arrested has to go to prison unattended by demonstrative escort. There is still a desire on the part of crowds to flock to courts or to follow civil resisters as they are being taken to jails.

There are many other things which I can mention and which require attention. Whilst therefore each province is free to do as it likes so long as it fulfils the conditions laid down for individual civil disobedience, my own advice is that they should not make haste.

QUESTION : Do you think that within a short interval of suspension of certain activities and their restoration by the All-India Congress Committee the atmosphere had cleared to an extent as would justify the resanctioning of those activities?

ANSWER : I thought the resolution itself was perfectly clear on the point. If you will look at the Bardoli resolutions you will find a stiff condition laid down for mass civil disobedience. You will see that individual civil disobedience is treated in the resolution in a different way. Its suspension is only till further instructions, meaning clearly that whilst mass civil disobedience was being suspended it was considered necessary by the Working Committee to suspend other activities and to understand the situation thoroughly for itself, [and] for that purpose to refer the matter to the All-India

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXI, pp. 411-4.

Congress Committee. Now the only change made by the All-India Congress Committee is that instead of itself fixing the time for re-embarking upon individual civil disobedience it throws the responsibility on the provincial Congress committees. What these committees will do I do not know. I have myself advised, as you will observe, against immediately re-embarking upon individual civil disobedience but if a province considers that its atmosphere is not in any shape or form affected by the Chauri Chaura tragedy so that there is no danger whatsoever of violence breaking out, and further if a province finds that it can comply with all the conditions whose fulfilment is required by the Congress, that province will certainly have the right of re-embarking upon individual civil disobedience. The All-India Congress Committee therefore has not passed any judgment as to whether the interval is enough or whether there should be a long delay. Each Province is called upon to judge for itself, and seeing that provinces were jealous of their rights and resented even suspicion about their ability to manage their own affairs in the matter of civil disobedience the All-India Congress Committee could not possibly resist the demand for the restoration of provincial autonomy.

But how is it that even after receiving the third warning from God you have so soon granted the provincial autonomy which at least in the case of U.P. was not exercised properly?

The third warning now deters me from immediately embarking upon mass civil disobedience; I would think 50 times before embarking upon mass civil disobedience. The deprivation of provincial autonomy was intended only to be temporary and was resorted to in order to gain control over the organizations and to test the measure of responsiveness, and, the fact that the provinces have responded in the noble manner they have done put the All-India Congress Committee upon its honour. It would have been resented by the provinces if autonomy was not restored, nor is it possible to say that the Chauri Chaura tragedy would not have occurred if there were no provincial autonomy. Whilst from the Congress standpoint condemnation of the acts of the mob can be regarded as too severe, from the public point of view, I can safely say that blame can at least be evenly distributed between the Congress organizations and the Government. What I mean is that the Government by deliberately withdrawing the leaders known for their belief in non-violence and for their ability to manage Congress affairs put undue strain upon the masses, surely, judged by the ordinary standard. It is not a matter for surprise that such

an awful tragedy should occur, nor is mob frenzy a speciality in the Gorakhpur district or in India, because such mob frenzy has before taken place in all parts of the world. The Congress condemnation, therefore, is due to the Congress pledge of non-violence.

Considering the progress in respect of the conditions laid down by the Congress, can you say how much time it will take before swaraj is attained?

It is very difficult for me to forecast the time for the simple reason that there are many things which enable me to fix one day and many other things which prevent me from giving any date whatever.

Have you ever used the power of dictatorship?

Never. Nor has the legal occasion arisen for the exercise of these powers, because they can be exercised only when the Congress organization is paralysed through Government repression.

Suppose you are arrested, are you going to nominate a successor dictator?

No. I have absolutely no power to nominate. The power has not yet accrued to me inasmuch as the Congress organization is in a fair working order.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 1-3-1922

197. NOTES

Congress a Fetish

We must avoid the Congress becoming a fetish. I love the idea of everybody becoming a Congressman and everybody yielding willing and intelligent obedience to the Congress resolutions. But I abhor the idea of anybody becoming a Congressman merely because it is an old or a great institution or yielding obedience to its resolutions whether one likes it or not. The rule of majority has a narrow application, i.e., one should yield to the majority in matters of detail. But it is slavery to be amenable to the majority no matter what its decisions are. Thus notwithstanding the Congress resolution, it is wrong, in my opinion, to withdraw from Councils or not to covet election thereto, if one believes that Councils are even a tolerably good institution. It is similarly wrong for a lawyer to suspend practice merely because the Congress says so. Democracy is not a state in which people act like sheep. Under democracy individual liberty of opinion and action is jealously guarded. I therefore believe that the minority has a perfect right to act differently from the majority so long as it does not act in the name of

the Congress. A practising lawyer may become a Congressman; he cannot be called a non-co-operator. He cannot and should not, therefore, be on the All-India Congress Committee. Similarly one who does not wear hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar or a title-holder or a Councillor may not be called non-co-operator though all these may be Congressmen.

But not only do I think that a Congressman is not bound by the resolutions which he does not approve of, he is also entitled always to go beyond the Congress resolutions, provided that he does not violate the creed and if he does not act in the name of the Congress. Supposing that the restrictions put by the Congress do not suit a particular province, that that province has even voted against them, that that province finds that it can look after itself, it has every right to go forward and justify its rebellion by success. The Congress only finds the highest common factor, but it may conceivably be far short of the requirements of a particular province. That province may, if it has confidence and if it is not likely to jeopardize any Congress interest, certainly go on with its own programme on its own responsibility and at the risk of a vote of censure from the Congress. This, in my opinion, is what the spirit of democracy requires. What I have stated is an illustration of domestic civil disobedience. Thus and thus only shall we save ourselves from false idolatry.

For Khilafat Committees

I continue to receive complaints from many quarters that the Khilafat members do not comply with the conditions of the Congress pledge for volunteers and that they raise religious objections. I venture to point out that all the religious objections were considered by distinguished Ulemas at the Congress and the pledge was framed in consultation with them. I would, therefore, urge Khilafat Committees to give their full co-operation to the Congress. Indeed, every Mussulman who belongs to a Khilafat Committee should deem it his duty to belong also to the Congress. There can be only one national organization. That organization is the Congress, and Mussulmans should make it as much their own as the Hindus. That is the least required to demonstrate Hindu-Muslim unity.

Khaddar Indispensable

I regeret to find that Jamiet-ul-Ulema[1] has sent the Working Committee a pledge for the volunteers which is highly unsatisfactoy.

[1] A religious organization of Muslims

That pledge does not insist upon khaddar for personal wear. Every condition is an integral part of the Congress pledge and I hold it to be as essential as Hindu-Muslim unity. Break up the unity and you break up swaraj. Give up khaddar and you will find it *impossible* to lift the masses from the economic and moral degradation. Unity between races and the re-enthronement of the spinning-wheel in India's sixty million homes give you the requisite strength to fight the Government, if you are non-violent. I gladly concede that you can easily fight the Government with arms without the unity and without the spinning-wheel. The result will be not swaraj, but one plunderer giving place to his superior and between the two a greater grinding of the masses. I invite both the Hindus and the Mussulmans who love India to fight such a prospect even unto death. I therefore urge the Jamiet to give immediate effect to the request of the Working Committee. The Khilafat Committees have been giving, on the whole, great strength and assistance to Congress organizations. As time goes forward, the co-operation should grow stronger. There is just a danger of the two organizations running in opposite directions. Each must help the other as the one eye requires full co-operation of the other.

There will no doubt be variety of work in the two organizations. But on cardinal matters, i.e., non-violence, khaddar and unity among all the races, there is no room for variety or degrees. I understand that the Jamiet has been told that khaddar is not always available. Of course it is not available in some places where the workers have not carried out their trust. But they should know that in Bombay and Ahmedabad and in many other places khaddar can be had in any quantity required. These are the prices at which the Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee, Ahmedabad, supplies khaddar:

Khaddar suitable for suiting 9 as. per yard
Khaddar suitable for shirting 7 as. per yard

Needless Nervousness

I am sorry that I find a nervous fear among some Hindus and Mohammedans that I am undermining their faith and that I am even doing irreparable harm to India by my uncompromising preaching of non-violence. They seem almost to imply that violence is their creed. I touch a tender spot if I talk about extreme non-violence in their presence. They confound me with texts from the *Mahabharata* and the Koran eulogizing or permitting violence. Of the *Mahabharata* I can write without restraint, but the most devout

Mohammedan will not, I hope, deny me the privilege of understanding the message of the Prophet. I make bold to say that violence is the creed of no religion and that whereas non-violence in most cases is obligatory in all, violence is merely permissible in some cases. But I have not put before India the final form of non-violence. The non-violence that I have preached from Congress platforms is non-violence as a policy. But even policies require honest adherence in thought, word and deed. If I believe that honesty is the best policy, surely whilst I so believe, I must be honest in thought, word and deed; otherwise I become an impostor. Non-violence being a policy means that it can upon due notice be given up when it proves unsuccessful or ineffective. But simple morality demands that whilst a particular policy is pursued, it must be pursued with all one's heart. It is simple policy to march along a certain route, but the soldier who marches with an unsteady step along that route is liable to be summarily dismissed. I become therefore incredulous when people talk to me sceptically about non-violence or are seized with fright at the very mention of the word non-violence. If they do not believe in the expedient of non-violence, they must denounce it but not claim to believe in the expedient when their heart resists it. How disastrous it would be, if not believing in violence even as an expedient, I joined, say, a violence party and approached a gun with a perturbed heart! The reader will believe me when I say that I have the capacity for killing a fly. But I do not believe in killing even flies. Now suppose I joined an expedition for fly-killing as an expedient. Will I not be expected before being permitted to join the expedition to use all the available engines of destruction whilst I remained in the army of fly-killers? If those who are in the Congress and the Khilafat Committees will perceive the simple truth, we shall certainly either finish the struggle this year to a successful end or be so sick of non-violence as to give up the pretension and set about devising some other programme.

I hold that Swami Shraddhanandji has been needlessly criticized for the proposition he intended to move. His argument is absolutely honest. He thinks that we as a body do not really believe in non-violence even as a policy. Therefore we shall never fulfil the programme of non-violence. Therefore, he says, let us go to the Councils and get what crumbs we may. He was trying to show the unreality of the position of those who believe in the policy with their lips, whereas they are looking forward to violence for final deliverance. I do say that if Congressmen do not fully *believe* in the policy, they are doing an injury to the country by pretend-

ing to follow it. If violence is to be the basis of future government, the Councillors are undoubtedly the wisest. For it is through the Councils that, by the same devices by which the present administrators rule us, the Councillors hope to seize power from the former's hands. I have little doubt that those who nurse violence in their bosoms will find no benefit from the lip profession of non-violence. I urge, therefore, with all the vehemence at my command that those who do not believe in non-violence should secede from the Congress and from non-co-operation and prepare to seek election or re-join law-courts or Government colleges as the case may be. Let there be no manner of doubt that swaraj established by non-violent means will be different in kind from the swaraj that can be established by armed rebellion. Police and punishments there will be even under such swaraj. But there would be no room for brutalities such as we witness today both on the part of the people and the Government. And those, whether they call themselves Hindus or Mussulmans, who do not fully believe in the policy of non-violence should abandon both non-co-operation and non-violence.

For me, I am positive that neither in the Koran nor in the *Mahabharata* there is any sanction for and approval of the triumph of violence. Though there is repulsion enough in Nature, she *lives* by attraction. Mutual love enables Nature to persist. Man does not live by destruction. Self-love compels regard for others. Nations cohere because there is mutual regard among the individuals composing them. Some day we must extend the national law to the universe, even as we have extended the family law to form nations—a larger family. God has ordained that India should be such a nation. For so far as reason can perceive, India cannot become free by armed rebellion for generations. India can become free by refraining from national violence. India has now become tired of rule based upon violence. That to me is the message of the plains. The people of the plains do not know what it is to put up an organized armed fight. And they must become free, for they want freedom. They have realized that power seized by violence will only result in their greater grinding.

Such at any rate is the reasoning that has given birth to the *policy*, not the *dharma*, of non-violence. And even as a Mussulman or a Hindu believing in violence applies the creed of non-violence in his family, so are both called upon without question to apply the policy of non-violence in their mutual relations and in their relation to other races and classes not excluding Englishmen. Those who do not believe in this policy and do not wish to live up to it in full, retard the movement by remaining in it.

Advice to Provincial Committees

It is thus clear what I would like the Provincial organizations to do. They must not for the present disobey the Government orders so far as it is at all possible. They must not, before they have searched their hearts, take forward action but bring about an absolutely calm atmosphere. No imprisonment courted in anger has availed us anything. I agree with the Mussulman view which is also the Hindu view that there is no imprisonment for the sake of it. All imprisonment to be useful has to be courted for religion or country and that by men and women clad in khaddar and without anger or violence in their hearts. If the provinces have no such men and women, they should not embark on civil disobedience at all.

Constructive Programme

Hence it is that the constructive programme has been framed. It will steady and calm us. It will wake our organizing spirit, it will make us industrious, it will render us fit for swaraj, it will cool our blood. We shall be spat upon, laughed at, sworn at, may be even kicked and cursed. We must put up with it all inasmuch as we have harboured anger in our breasts even though we have been under the pledge of non-violence. I must frankly state that unless we can retrieve our steps deliberately, cultivate non-violence and manufacture khaddar, we cannot render effective help to the Khilafat, we cannot get redress of the Punjab wrong, nor can we attain swaraj. My leadership is perfectly useless if I cannot convince co-workers and the public of the absolute and immediate necessity of vigorously prosecuting the constructive programme.

We must know whether we can get a crore men and women in all India who believe in the attainment of swaraj by peaceful, i.e., non-violent and legitimate, i.e., truthful means.

We must get money for the prosecution of swadeshi and we will know how many people there are in India who are willing honestly to pay one rupee out of every hundred of their past year's income to the Tilak Memorial Swaraj Fund. This subscription the Committee expects from Congressmen and sympathizers.

We must spend money like water in introducing the spinning-wheel in every home, in the manufacture and the distribution of khaddar wherever required.

Surely we have long neglected the untouchable brother. He has slaved for us too long. We must now serve him.

Our liquor picketing has done some good but not substantial. Not till we pierce the home of the drunkard shall we make any real advance. We must know why he drinks; what we can substitute for it. We must have a census of all the drunkards of India.

Social service department has been looked at with the utmost contempt. If the non-co-operation movement is not malicious that department is a necessity. We want to render alike to friend and foe service in times of distress. We are thereby able to keep our relations sweet with all in spite of our political aloofness.

Laughing at It

Social service and temperance reform were laughed at as part of the struggle for swaraj. It was a painful exhibition of ignorance of the essentials of swaraj. I claim that the human mind or human society is not divided into water-tight compartments called social, political and religious. All act and react upon one another. What is more, the vast majority of Hindus and Mussulmans have joined the struggle believing it to be religious. The masses have come in because they want to save the Khilafat and the cow. Deprive the Mussulman of the hope of helping the Khilafat and he will shun the Congress: tell the Hindu he cannot save the cow if he joins the Congress, he will to a man leave it. To laugh at moral reform and social service is to laugh at swaraj, the Khilafat and the Punjab.

Even the organization of schools was laughed at. Let us see what it means. We have demolished the prestige of Government schools. It was perhaps necessary in 1920 to do the picketing and certainly not to mind the boys being neglected, but it would be criminal any longer to picket Government schools or to neglect national institutions. We can now only draw more boys and girls by putting existing national schools on a better footing. They have the advantage of being in institutions where they breathe free air and where they are not shadowed. But the advantage of scientific training in carding, hand-spinning and hand-weaving and of having intellectual training in keeping with the requirements of the country must be added. We shall show by successful experiment the superiority of training in national schools and colleges.

Even the panchayats came in for ridicule. Little did the critics realize that the masses in many parts of India had ceased to resort to law courts. If we do not organize honest panchayats, they will certainly go back to the existing law-courts.

POLITICAL RESULTS

Nor is a single step devoid of vast political results. Adequate manufacture and universal use of khaddar means a permanent boycott of foreign cloth and automatic distribution of sixty crores of rupees annually among the poor people. Permanent disappearance of the drink and the opium evils mean an annual saving of seventeen crores to the people and a diminution of that revenue for the Government. Constructive effort for the untouchables means the addition to the Congress ranks of six crores of men and women who will for ever be bound to the Congress. Social service department, if it becomes a live thing, will restore the strained relations that exist today among co-operators (whether Indian or English) and non-co-operators. To work the full constructive programme therefore is to achieve all we want. To fail in fulfilling the programme is to postpone all possibility of effective civil disobedience.

WHAT OF THE KHILAFAT

Several Mussulman friends have said, "Your programme is good for swaraj but it is too slow to be good enough for saving the Khilafat. The Khilafat question will be solved in a few months and whatever can be done must be done now." Let us examine the question. The cause of the Khilafat, thank God, is safe in the hands of Gazi Mustafa Kamal Pasha. He has retrieved the prestige of the Khilafat as no Mussulman of modern times has done. India has in my opinion helped not much by her money, though that has meant something, but by Hindu-Muslim unity and by telling the Government in the plainest terms possible that India will have nothing to do with the Government and will declare complete independence if England persists in her anti-Turk policy and exploits India's resources against the Turks. The greater the strength in that declaration the greater becomes the prestige of Islam and the greater the power of Mustafa Kamal Pasha. Some people think that mere temporary embarrassment of the Government by a few thousand men, irrespective of qualification, going to jail will make the Government yield to our wishes. Let us not underrate the power of the Government. I am sure that the Government does possess as yet the power to crush the spirit of violence. And it is nothing but violence to go to jail anyhow. It is the suffering of the pure and God-fearing which will tell, not the bluster of the rabble. The purer India becomes the stronger she becomes. Purity is the only weapon of the weak in body. The strong in body in their insolence often mobilize their

"hard fibre" and seek to usurp the very function of the Almighty. But when that "hard fibre" comes in contact not with its like but with the exact opposite, it has nothing to work against. A solid body can only move on and against another solid body. You cannot build castles in the air. Therefore, the impatient Mussulmans must see the obvious truth that the little disorganized bluster of the rabble, whether it expresses itself by going to jail or by burning buildings or by making noisy demonstrations, will be no match for the organized insolence of the "hard fibre" of the "most determined people in the world". This terrific insolence can only be met by the utter humility of the pure and the meek. God helps the helpless, not those who believe they can do something. Every page of the Koran teaches me, a non-Muslim, this supreme lesson. Every *sura* of the Koran begins in the name of God the Compassionate and the Merciful. Let us therefore be strong in soul though weak in body.

If the Mussulmans believe in the policy of non-violence, they must give it a fair trial and they will not have given it any trial at all if they harbour anger i.e., violence in their breasts.

As it is, by our bluster, by intimidation, by show of force, by violent picketing we shall estrange more men than intimidate into co-operation with us. And how can we dare seek co-operation by compulsion when we have refused to be coerced into co-operation with the Government? Must we not observe the same law that we expect others to observe towards us?

If the Treaty of Sevres[1] is not revised to our satisfaction, it is not finished. The virtue lies in India's determination not to be satisfied with anything less than her demands. After all, Mustafa Kamal may not insist upon the settlement of the Jazirat-ul-Arab[2]. We must continue the fight so long as it is not returned intact to the Mussulmans. If the Mussulmans consider that they can gain their end by force of arms, let them secede from the non-violent alliance by all means. But if they know that they cannot, let them carry it out in thought, word and deed and they will find that there is no surer or quicker remedy for assuaging their grief and redressing the Khilafat wrong.

Need of Excitement!

Some friends argue that in order to continue the struggle the people need some stimulant. No person or nation can be kept alive

1 Which provided for the partitioning of the Turkish Empire

2 Literally, "the island of Arabia", which, as defined by Muslim religious authorities, included Syria, Palestine and Mesopotamia as well as the peninsula of Arabia

merely upon stimulants. We have had much too much of it latterly. And the antidote now is a depressant. If therefore depression follows the cessation of all aggressive activities and people forsake us, it would not only not hinder our cause but help it. Then we shall not have to shoulder the responsibility for a Chauri Chaura. Then we could go forward with a steady step without any danger of having to look back. If however we can survive the depression and keep the people with us, we shall have positive proof that the people have caught the message of non-violence and that the people are as capable of doing constructive work as they have shown themselves capable of doing destructive work. Whatever the result, the present excitement must be abated at any cost.

"SOMERSAULTS"

I have carefully read Mr. Kelkar's article in *The Mahratta* criticising the Bardoli resolutions. I acknowledge the gentle and considerate manner with which he has handled me. I wish I could persuade him and many who think like Mr. Kelkar that what he calls a somersault was an inevitable operation. Consistency is a desirable quality, but it becomes a "hobgoblin" when it refuses to see facts. I have known dispositions of armies changed from hour to hour. Once during the Zulu revolt we were all asleep. We had definite orders for the morrow. But suddenly at about midnight we were awakened and ordered to retire behind bags of grain which served as protecting walls because the enemy was reported to be creeping up the hill on which we had encamped. In another hour it was understood that it was a false alarm and we were permitted to retire to our tents. All the "somersaults" were necessary changes. Remedies vary with the variation in diagnosis. The same physician one day detects malaria and gives a large dose of quinine, detects typhoid the next and stops all medicine and orders careful nursing and fasting, later detects consumption and orders change and solid food. Is the physician capricious or cautious and honest?

Without being untruthful and indifferent if not stupid, I could not do what Mr. Kelkar suggests I should have done at the time of the Bombay Conference[1]. It would have been untruthful to have yielded to the Moderate friends beyond what was conceded as the Indian sky appeared to me to be clear blue and promised to remain so. My diagnosis may be blamed but not my decision based on the then diagnosis, nor could I possibly conceal

[1] The Leaders' Conference of January 14 and 15, 1922

the demands especially in the teeth of the Viceregal declaration at Calcutta that nothing was to be expected in the matters of the Khilafat and the Punjab and that as the reforms[1] had only just been granted, no advance was to be expected. I would have been unfair to the Viceroy as also to the Moderate friends if I had not said that our demands were emphatic and clear-cut. To have then suspended mass civil disobedience would have been a weakness. But Chauri Chaura darkened the horizon and I discovered a new diagnosis. It would have been idiotic on my part not to have declared in the clearest possible language that the patient required a drastic change of treatment. Not to have suspended after Chauri Chaura would have been unpardonable weakness. I assure the reader that Bardoli's unpreparedness had nothing to do with the decision. For Bardoli in my opinion was quite able to give battle. I have stated several times in the columns of *Young India* and *Navajivan* that I considered Bardoli to be quite ready for the fray.

The fact is that the critics do not realize the implications of civil disobedience. They seem unconsciously to ignore the potent adjective "civil".

The more I think of the Bardoli decision and the more I rehearse the debates and the talks at Delhi, the more convinced I am of the correctness of the decision and of the necessity of provinces stopping all offensive activities for the time being even at the risk of being considered weak and forfeiting popular applause and support.

Sinful Idolatry

I am myself an idolater though I am also an iconoclast as so many of my friends know to their cost. Idolatry is implanted in the human breast, and we worship perhaps nothing so much as our own bodies, but I am not in this note dealing with idolatry that is permissible; I am merely writing this note to draw attention to the sinful practice that seems to have commenced somewhere in the South of putting my portraits in chariots for religious processions. Mr. Andrews draws my attention by telegram to the fact that if such a practice is continued it might even lead to rioting because not everybody will tolerate the idea of putting portraits of historical persons or living persons in chariots drawn in connection with religious festivals, and I hold it to be criminal when ordinary idols are replaced by portraits of me. It can do no

[1] The Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms

good to these blind worshippers and must do violence to devotees who cannot possibly tolerate the idea of their idols being insulted. There is ample excuse for people worshipping heroes of the remote past in the form of idols, but it offends one's sense of propriety to be called upon to offer incense to living persons in the manner said to have been done somewhere in the Madras Presidency. If we are making for real manifestation of the democratic spirit, there is no room for such blind or excessive hero-worship. I would urge every Congress worker, therefore, whenever he sees such blind worship to discountenance it and by every legitimate means to wean people from it.

An Idle Threat

It seems to be the special good fortune of Shrimati Sarojini Naidu[1] to be threatened with prosecution or at least to have her statements contradicted. It will be remembered that her charges about the official misdeeds during the Martial Law period were repudiated by Mr. Montagu. She took up the challenge and quoted chapter and verse from the Congress inquiry report. If she was wrong it was the Congress Commissioners who misled her. She was able to prove that the India Office did not even know the full contents of the report.

This time the Madras Government has actually threatened prosecution. I wish they would make good their threat. India will then have the rare chance of listening to the statement of an undefended poetess of India. Only there will be such a rush for hearing the poetic non-co-operator in the courts that the trial will have to be either in an open *maidan* (not a bad thing) or inside prison walls. There is no hall large enough in all India that would hold the eager crowd that would want to have a glimpse of the bulbul[2] in a British cage.

Well, she has lost no time in repeating her charges. Chivalrous Keshava Menon and many others have come forward to support her statement. Mr. Prakasam has published the portrait of [the] boy whose arms were cruelly cut off. She has invited the Government to prosecute her or to tender an unqualified apology or before so doing to appoint an impartial commission of non-officials to investigate her charges. India awaits the reply of the gallant Madras Government. It surprises me that Lord Willingdon should have omitted the courtesy of privately writing to Mrs. Naidu

[1] 1879-1949; poet, patriot, Congress leader and a close associate of Gandhiji
[2] Sarojini Naidu was popularly knows as "the Nightingale of India".

asking her whether she had made the charges in an unguarded moment and if not, whether she could assist the Government in proving them. Have English noblemen in their rage forgotten their traditional chivalry? Must they insult one of the most distinguished daughters of India because she has the temerity to take up the popular cause? I do expect Lord Willingdon to make the *amende honorable* and that in a handsome manner. I assure him that he will regain for the Government a little of the lost prestige by such an honourable act. It cannot affect the struggle one way or the other. But an honourable act on the part of the Government will come like a drop of rain on a parched land.

The "Bhils" of Rajputana

The *Bhils* of Rajputana are a simple and a brave people. They have certain grievances. They have found in one Motilal Tejavat a friend and helper. He has been, it is said, weaning them from drink, gambling and meat-eating and asking them to live an orderly industrious life. He has been also advising them about their grievances. The only fault I can find is that he has been moving about with a large retinue of his followers. This has undoubtedly caused uneasiness among the States. Hearing all sorts of complaints against Mr. Motilal I asked Mr. Manilal Kothari to inquire. He did so with the permission and the help of the respective States and the *Bhils* have assured him that they do not mean any mischief at all. He has met Mr. Motilal also. The latter has assured Mr. Kothari of his peaceful intentions. But unfortunately in the meanwhile the Idar State is reported to have taken action against the *Bhils* and killed four of them. I do not know the full details nor do I know the reason for the action. I can only hope that they will settle the *Bhil* complaints by appointing an arbitration court and promise free pardon to Mr. Motilal if he comes out of the hills and surrenders himself. The *Bhils* have been long neglected by the States and reformers. If they are given a helping hand, they can become the pride of India. All they need is the spinning-wheel in their homes and schools in which their children can receive simple education. In the vast awakening that has taken place no race can be left out of the calculation of the States and reformers.

The Toll of Andhra

Here is a letter[1] from a correspondent:

[1] Not reproduced here; it described the arrest and beating of volunteers in Guntur district despite the stoppage of the "no-tax" campaign.

I am not surprised at the reported treatment. The authorities have got the chance of a lifetime. They would fain break the proud Andhra spirit and brutally crush it for ever. I have no Bardoli just now to present them with. But I urge them to be patient, not to be angry nor to be cowed down. Let them bear all the brutalities without harbouring ill will against the wrong doer. He can take our possessions and our bodies. He cannot take away our wills.

Afflicted Assam

The pages of *Young India* have contained much information about repression in Assam. In my opinion Assam has undergone perhaps the greatest suffering. It has no leader left worthy of the name. Those who are left are working under extraordinary difficulties. The following graphic description[1] needs no embellishment.

The reader should reread with the above p. 105 *Young India* 16th February. My advice to the workers that are left is, stop for the time being all aggressive activities. Do the constructive work with all your energy. If the spirit of violence has crept into our ranks at all, drive it out. Hold your Congress office under the beautiful trees of Assam. The storm will blow over in a moment, if we shall be true to ourselves.

Ajmer High-handedness

Pandit Gaurishanker Bhargav sends the following wire[2] from Delhi which speaks for itself:

> Ajmer news completely suppressed by local authorities, who have censored all telegrams going and coming in names of local leaders. . . . Ordinary telegrams of Provincial Congress going to districts in usual course of business are censored by the Commissioner. . . . The spirit in the beginning was naturally violent, but thanks to the non-violence movement of Mahatmaji and the good efforts of the local leaders . . . the entire masses of town have shown great forbearance and complete self-control even under greatest provocation. The other day a garden party was given by some *johukams*[3] to the retiring Commissioner Patterson in the name of citizens of Ajmer. The volunteers who went to impress the guests that the party was not on behalf of the citizens were mercilessly caned by the Police Superintendent, but all remained calm and quiet. If there were some stray examples of Chauri Chaura, there are more examples of non-violence throughout the

[1] Not reproduced here; it gave an account of the burning and looting of Congress offices and of arbitrary sentences passed on volunteers.

[2] Only excerpts reproduced here

[3] Servile people

country. The authorities have bent so low that complete absence of peace and justice is shown at every step. The distribution of *fatwa* has brought many brilliant youths of Ajmer in jail; but the distribution of the same *fatwa* to the *sowars* and the police in the Court by twenty organized volunteers kept them unarrested. Some five hundred volunteers were organized for this collective civil disobedience, but the very first unit, who went round the city in procession and distributed the *fatwa* to the very police and mounted *sowars* who were kept in readiness for their arrest, were left untouched though again and again they challenged the Police Superintendent and even the Commissioner in his Court that they were distributing the *fatwa*. Such is the law and justice of the Government. On the trial of Kunwar Chand Karan Sarda, the pleaders wanted the case to be tried in the open court instead of in jail, but the Commissioner wanted the pleaders to take assurance from Pandit Gaurishanker Bhargav that complete peace and order would prevail before he could transfer the case to open court. On approach of the pleaders to Panditji, he refused to give any undertaking to the Commissioner or the co-operating pleaders, but told them that their very creed was non-violence and therefore there cannot be the least doubt of any breach of peace. It was then that the case of Kunwar Chand Karan Sarda was transferred to the open court.

Kindly give space to all these news as these are the brief summary of many important news suppressed by the local authorities. These are therefore sent through Delhi Telegraph Office. The last news is that of the big *urs* fair coming on 1st March, when the All-India Ulemas conference is going to meet in Ajmer. The Political Conference would also meet, where all the members of the All-India Congress Committee and Moderate friends are cordially invited. Mrs. Sarojini Naidu is elected President of the Conference, while Pandit Gaurishanker Bhargav is elected Chairman of the reception committee. P. Shersingh and Maulvi Mohuddin are the General Secretaries of the Committee.

Young India, 2-3-1922

198. THE ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE

The session[1] just past of the All-India Congress Committee was in some respects more memorable than the Congress. There is so much undercurrent of violence, both conscious and unconscious, that I was actually and literally praying for a disastrous defeat. I have always been in a minority. The reader does not know that in South Africa I started with practical unanimity, reached a minority of sixty-four and even sixteen and went up again to a huge majority. The best and the most solid work was done in the wilderness of minority.

I know that the only thing that the Government dread is this huge majority I seem to command. They little know that I dread it even more than they. I have become literally sick of the adoration of the unthinking multitude. I would feel certain of my ground, if I was spat upon by them. Then there would be no need for confession of Himalayan and other miscalculations, no retracing, no rearranging.

But it was not to be.

A friend warned me against exploiting my "dictatorship". He little knew that I had never once used it, if only because the legal occasion had not yet arisen for its use. The "dictatorship" accrues to me only when the ordinary Congress machinery is rendered unworkable by the Government.

Far from my consciously or unconsciously exploiting my "dictatorship" I have begun to wonder if I am not unconsciously allowing myself to be "exploited". I confess that I have a dread of it such as I never had before. The only safety lies in my shamelessness. I have warned my friends of the Committee that I am incorrigible. I shall continue to confess blunders each time the people commit them. The only tyrant I accept in this world is the "still small voice" within. And even though I have to face the prospect of a minority of one, I humbly believe I have the courage to be in such a hopeless minority. That to me is the only truthful position.

But I am a sadder and I hope a wiser man today. I see that our non-violence is skin-deep. We are burning with indignation. The Government is feeding it by its insensate acts. It seems almost as if the Government wants to see this land covered with

[1] Of February 24 and 25, 1922

murder, arson and rapine, in order to be able once more to claim exclusive ability to put them down.

This non-violence therefore seems to be due merely to our helplessness. It almost appears as if we are nursing in our bosoms the desire to take revenge the first time we get the opportunity.

Can true voluntary non-violence come out of this seeming forced non-violence of the weak? Is it not a futile experiment I am conducting? What if, when the fury bursts, not a man, woman or child is safe and every man's hand is raised against his fellow being? Of what avail is it then if I fast myself to death in the event of such a catastrophe coming to pass?

What is the alternative? To lie and say that what I know to be evil, is good? To say that true and voluntary co-operation will come out of false and forced co-operation is to say that light will result from darkness.

Co-operation with the Government is as much a weakness and a sin as alliance with suspended violence.

The difficulty is almost insurmountable. Hence with the growing knowledge of the fact that this non-violence is merely superficial, I must continually make mistakes and retrace, even as a man wading his way through a tractless forest must continually stop, retrace, stumble, be hurt and even bleed.

I was prepared for a certain amount of depression, disappointment and resentment, but I confess I was totally unprepared for the hurricane of opposition. It became clear to me that the workers were in no mood to do any serious work of construction. The constructive programme lent no enchantment. They were not a social reform association. They could not wrest power from the Government by such humdrum reform work. They wanted to deliver "non-violent" blows! All this appeared so thoroughly unreal. They would not stop to think that even if they could defeat the Government by a childish display of rage, they could not conduct the Government of the country for a single day without serious and laborious organization and construction.

We must not go to jail, as Mahomed Ali would say, "in a false issue". It is not *any* imprisonment that will lead to swaraj. It is not *every* disobedience that will fire us with the spirit of obedience and discipline. Jails are no gateway to liberty for the confirmed criminal. They are temples of liberty only for those who are innocence personified. The execution of Socrates made immortality a living reality for us—not so the execution of countless murderers. There is no warrant for supposing that we can steal swaraj by the imprisonment of thousands of nominally non-

violent men with hatred, ill will and violence raging in their breasts.

It would be otherwise if we were fighting with arms, giving and receiving blow for blow. The imprisonment of those who may be caught intimidating, assaulting and murdering will certainly embarrass the Government and when they are tired, they would as elsewhere yield. But such is not our fight today. Let us be truthful. If it is through "show of force" that we wish to gain swaraj, let us drop non-violence and offer such violence as we may. It would be a manly, honest and sober attitude — an attitude the world has been used to for ages past. No one can then accuse us of the terrible charge of hypocrisy.

But the majority will not listen to me. In spite of all my warnings and passionate plea for rejecting my resolution, if they did not believe in non-violence as indispensable for the attainment of our goal, they accepted it without a single material change. I would ask them therefore to realize their responsibility. They are now bound not to rush to civil disobedience but to settle down to the quiet work of construction. I would urge them to be indifferent to the clamour for immediate action. The immediate action is not courting imprisonment, nor even free speech and free association or free pen, but self-purification, introspection, quiet organization. We have lost our foothold. If we do not take care, we are likely to be drowned in the waters whose depth we do not know.

It is no use thinking of the prisoners. When I heard of Chauri Chaura I sacrificed them as the first penitential act. They have gone to jail to be released only by the strength of the people; indeed the hope was the swaraj parliament's first act would be to open the prison gates. God had decreed otherwise. We who are outside have tried and failed. The prisoners can now only gain by serving the full term of their imprisonment. Those who went under false pretences, or under any misapprehension or under a mistaken understanding of the movement, can come out by apologizing and by petitioning. The movement will be all the stronger for the purging. The stoutest hearts will rejoice in the opportunity of unexpectedly greater suffering. Though thousands of Russians have "rotted" in the Russian prisons for years and years, that unhappy people are not yet free. Liberty is a jilt most difficult to woo and please. We have shown the power of suffering. But we have not suffered enough. If the people in general keep passively non-violent and if only a few are actively, honestly and knowingly non-violent in intent, word and deed, we can reach the goal in

quickest time with the least suffering. But we shall indefinitely postpone the attainment if we send to prison men who harbour violence in their breasts.

Therefore the duty of the majority in their respective provinces is to face taunts, insults and if need be depletion in their ranks but determinedly to pursue their goal without swerving an inch. The authorities mistaking our suspension for weakness may resort to still greater oppression. We should submit to it. We should even abandon defensive civil disobedience and concentrate all our energy on the tasteless but health-giving economic and social reform. We should bend down on our knees and assure the Moderates that they need fear no harm from us. We should assure the zemindars that we have no ill will against them.

The average Englishman is haughty, he does not understand us, he considers himself to be a superior being. He thinks that he is born to rule us. He relies upon his forts or his gun to protect himself. He despises us. He wants to compel co-operation, i.e., slavery. Even him we have to conquer, not by bending the knee, but remaining aloof from him, but at the same time not hating him nor hurting him. It is cowardly to molest him. If we simply refuse to regard ourselves as his slaves and pay homage to him, we have done our duty. A mouse can only shun the cat. He cannot treat with her till she has filed the points of her claws and teeth. At the same time we must show every attention to those few Englishmen who are trying to cure themselves and fellow Englishmen of the disease of race superiority.

The minority has different ideals. It does not believe in the programme. Is it not right and patriotic for them to form a new party and a new organization? They will then truly educate the country. Those who do not believe in the creed should surely retire from the Congress. Even a national organization must have a creed. One, for instance, who does not believe in swaraj has no place in the Congress. I submit that even so has one who does not believe in "peaceful and legitimate means" no place in the Congress. A Congressman may not believe in non-co-operation and still remain in it but he cannot believe in violence and untruth and still be a Congressman. I was therefore deeply hurt when I found opposition to the note in the resolution about the creed and still more when I found opposition to my paraphrase of the two adjectives "peaceful" and "legitimate" into "non-violent" and "truthful" respectively.[1] I had reasons for the paraphrase. I was seriously

[1] *Vide* footnote 3 to "Working Committee's Resolutions at Bardoli", 12-2-1922.

told that the creed did not insist upon non-violence and truth as the indispensable means for the attainment of swaraj. I agreed to remove the paraphrase in order to avoid a painful discussion but I felt that truth was stabbed.

I am sure that those who raised this opposition are as patriotic as I claim to be, they are as eager for swaraj as every other Congressman. But I do say that the patriotic spirit demands their loyal and strict adherence to non-violence and truth and that if they do not believe in them they should retire from the Congress organization.

Is it not national economy to let all the ideals be sharply defined and to work independently of one another? That then which is most popular will win the day. If we are going to evolve the real spirit of democracy, we shall not do so by obstruction but by abstention.

The session of the All-India Congress Committee was a forcible demonstration of the fact that *we* are retarding the country's progress towards swaraj and not the Government. Every mistake of the Government helps. Every neglect of duty on our part hinders.

Young India, 2-3-1922

199. GOVERNMENT DENIALS

I. "Flogging in Prisons"

To

The Editor, *Young India*

DEAR SIR,

In continuation of my letter No. 402/C dated the 17th February, 1922, I invite your attention to an article in the form of a letter from Mr. Mahadev Desai, which you headed "Flogging in Prisons" and which you published in your issue of the 19th January last. In the course of that letter no less than six cases of flogging are mentioned and the implication is that political prisoners were involved. In two instances the names of certain persons are mentioned. They are Kailash Nath and Lachhmi Narayan Sharma. Enquiries have been made from the Superintendent of the Central Prison, Naini . . . I am able to affirm categorically that neither Kailash Nath nor Lachhmi Narayan, whose names were mentioned by the writer of the letter which you published, have ever been flogged in the Naini Jail, nor were they given any punishment whatsoever, with the exception of No. 1488, Kailash Nath, who was "warned" for refusing to

work when undergoing a sentence for rigorous imprisonment. . . . I beg that you will give a prominent place to this denial in an early issue.

Yours faithfully,
J. E. GONDGE
PUBLICITY COMMISSIONER

LUCKNOW,
18-2-1922

The categorical denial[1] is wholly unacceptable. Not till a full impartial investigation is made, can any contradiction of statements made by a public man of unimpeachable character be accepted, especially when the contradiction comes from interested quarters. I draw attention to the fact that the *Independent* of Allahabad publishes the statement that a prison official admitted to a Congressman the fact of the flogging of Mr. Lachhmi Narayan. There is just a chance that the prison authorities are quibbling when they deny "flogging". The letter published in *Young India* is a translation. The Gujarati word is the same for whipping, flogging and caning. I have known the habit of officials denying unofficial corporal punishments. I hope the Government do not wish the public to infer that if there is no record of corporal punishments in the jail register, it has not been administered. The contradiction I am publishing certainly makes me more uneasy than before, for it betrays an intention to persist in the inhumanity and to hush it by denials. The Publicity Commissioner ill-performs his duty by sending unsupported contradictions by accused parties.

II. DEHRA DUN INCIDENT

To
THE EDITOR, *Young India*

DEAR SIR,

. . . I beg to draw your further attention to the fact that you quoted as the 7th item of "lawless repression" in your rejoinder to the Government of India *communique*, "the shooting of a boy at Dehra Dun and the forcible dispersal of a public meeting at that place". . . . the obvious innuendo is that Government officials shot the boy. It is presumed that you are referring to the shooting incident on the 24th December 1921, when a certain young European named Madden shot a Mohammedan youth. Madden is not a Government servant. . . . The incident arose out of a personal quarrel and the promptest measures were taken to arrest Madden . . . The Civil Surgeon at the Magistrate's request came down in the night to see the injured boy. Madden was tried after the Xmas

[1] Only excerpts reproduced above

holidays and committed to sessions on charges under sections 307, 326 I.P.C. . . . Secondly, you have been undoubtedly misinformed as to the alleged cruel forcible dispersal of a public meeting. The facts are as follows:

1. Volunteer processions had become an extreme nuisance in Dehra Dun and their behaviour on several occasions had been highly provocative.

2. They were prohibited within certain areas by the Superintendent of Police with the Magistrate's assent, in the interests of non-co-operators themselves as the temper of certain members of the public was being sorely tried.

3. The local extremist organ *The Garhwali* had commented upon the unwisdom and folly of these demonstrators.

4. The volunteers decided to defy the orders of the Superintendent of Police . . .

5. The meeting was dispersed with very little force. No one was hurt . . . .

LUCKNOW,
15th February

Yours faithfully,
J. E. GONDGE

The Publicity Commissioner has certainly "caught" me regarding the shooting incident.[1] I should have been more precise and stated that the shooting was not by a Government servant. I now see that the mention itself was irrelevant and unjust to the Government. The shooting in question cannot in any way be as part of lawless repression. I tender my apology for the error which I assure the authorities was wholly unintentional.

The other contradiction however does not appeal to me at all. I deny the necessity in the first instance of the use of force. In the second instance the force used was out of all proportion to the requirements if my correspondent's description is to be relied upon. The public will not trust the interested official denial. I hope that the mistake about the shooting will [not] be used to discredit or underrate the account of the forcible dispersal. The mistake about the shooting was a thoughtless confusion of facts and their consequent misapplication.

III. A PEEP OF A BOMBAY JAIL

With the compliments of the Director of Information, Bombay.

In the issue of *Young India* for January 19 an extract was printed from *The Hindu* dealing with the alleged ill treatment of a certain "Rahmat Rasool, a Punjabi Martial Law prisoner", in the Hyderabad Central Prison.[2] Enquiries

[1] Only excerpts from his letter reproduced above

[2] *Vide* "Worse than Martial Law", 19-1-1922.

show that the allegations made are unfounded. The article appears to refer to a Gujarati prisoner named Himat Rasool, who was sentenced by the Ahmedabad Special Tribunal to transportation for life for cutting telegraph wires, setting fire to the telegraph office and rioting at Ahmedabad on 11th April 1919. The charges made and the actual facts relating thereto are as follows:

"On their arrival in this jail from the Andamans in November last no meals were given them for three days until the medical officer saw them and got them meals."

The prisoners (who arrived on December 6th) were seen daily both by the medical officer and the Superintendent but they refused to take *jowari* diet as they wanted wheat diet. This was given them on December 8th.

"Whenever the Superintendent approached them they were required to raise their hands as a Muslim does in prayer with the greeting 'Sarkar is one'. This immoral rule, interfering with the fundamental principles of Islam, Rahmat Rasool refused to obey, telling the Superintendent that for him God alone is one and that he can raise his hand in prayer before God alone, when the Superintendent proudly replied that he, as representative of Government, was his god in jail."

This is a pure invention. When the Superintendent or any official visits the prisoners, the latter stand with their hands open, the arms being at right angles to the elbows and the elbows in at the sides. The object of this is to show that there is nothing concealed in the hands with which an assault can be attempted. This attitude is obviously not that of a Muslim raising his hands in prayer and the procedure to which no objection has ever been raised is common to all jails. It is absolutely untrue that the Superintendent used the words attributed to him.

"The prisoner refused to be led away from the path of religion with the result that his religiousness was rewarded with the five-fold punishment of 30 stripes, 6 months' solitary confinement, six months' gunny clothing, 6 months' cross fetters and 6 months' bar fetters."

The facts are that on December 13th the prisoner refused to stand up when ordered, became very excited and was grossly impertinent to the Superintendent. He was awarded, not the punishment alleged but gunny clothing for one month and bar fetters for three months. Since the arrival of this prisoner in jail he has been eleven times awarded punishments, including 30 stripes and cross bar fetters for ten days for gross insubordination and persistently refusing to work. He is at present undergoing a punishment of three months' separate confinement awarded him in the Andamans for refusing to work and refusing to obey orders. His history sheet describes him as "a man of violent temper".

20th February, 1922

I venture to call this a brazen defence of a brutal punishment. It tells the public in so many words, "We have done it and we propose to continue." As I did not publish the incident for the edifi-

cation of the Government, I remain unperturbed by the shameless admission. The reader will please note that in all this *communique* there is no denial of a single material in particular. It makes no difference whether the name or description of the prisoner is correctly given. The facts that the prisoner had to starve for three days, that he had to stretch forth his hands in a humiliating fashion, that he had gunny clothing for one month, bar fetters for three, and thirty stripes and that he is now undergoing *separate* confinement for three months is sufficient corroboration of the allegations of *The Hindu*. I am prepared to assume that every prisoner who receives punishment is, in official parlance "a man of violent temper".

Young India, 2-3-1922

200. A LYING PLACARD

The following was handed to me in Delhi:

MAHATMA GANDHI'S MESSAGE TO NON-CO-OPERATORS

Stop Hartals
Suspend All N.C.O. Activities
O ye people of Delhi!
Come in your hundreds!!
Come in your thousands!!!
Welcome H.R.H. the Prince of Wales

I can only conclude that it was issued by or on behalf of the Government. I wish indeed I could have sent such a message. As it was, my misfortune was to send quite the opposite. Hartals were specifically retained in the Bardoli resolutions. Non-co-operation activities were not suspended. Aggressive civil disobedience and aggressive activities preparatory thereto were suspended. Apart from the untruthfulness of the placard the organizers did not even see that such lies could only strengthen the movement. But as a non-co-operator I do not want even co-operators to resort to lies. I need not be told that non-co-operators too have been found lying. It is known by this time that I spare neither friend nor foe when it is a question of departing from the code of honour.

Young India, 2-3-1922

201. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

[*March 2, 1922*][1]

I was so sorry you became suddenly ill and had to get down at Palghar.

I would like you carefully to read every line of *Young India.* I write to you to tell you that the meeting of the All-India Congress has simply confirmed the views with which I left Bardoli. So far as my influence counts I am going to dissuade people in the different provinces from embarking upon even defensive civil disobedience. For the time being, I have persuaded them to concentrate their attention upon the constructive programme, but all this does not mean any change in my attitude towards the Government. Its fraud, its hypocrisy, its unblushing worship of violence repel me more than ever and the time may come when I would want to shun the multitude as much as I shun the Government, though for a different reason. I am anxious to enlist your full co-operation.

Will you not give your whole-hearted co-operation in the prosecution of this constructive programme? I would like you not to be engrossed in the effort to bring about a round table conference, which is a futile effort at the present time; nor to be thinking of the prisoners. They will be quite all right taking their rest-cure in the prisons. I would so much like you to give your undivided attention to some part or other of the constructive programme. If you are well, as I hope you are, I would even trouble you to come over here and pass a quiet day with me. We could then discuss the possibilities of working along the lines indicated by me. I am in Ahmedabad till Wednesday. Next Monday, as you know, is my silent day. This will be in your hands on Friday. You can come on Saturday, Sunday, Tuesday or Wednesday, the earlier is better.

The Story of My Life, Vol. I, pp. 581-2

[1] From the source

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

EXTRACTS FROM SIR SANKARAN NAIR'S LETTER

To

THE EDITOR, *The Times of India*

SIR,

In view of certain statements which have already appeared in the Press, may I seek the hospitality of your columns for this letter.

We were called to confer together and devise means to come to an honourable settlement. I have come to the conclusion along with many others that any further conference with Mr. Gandhi and his followers is useless, and he will not be a party to what I consider any honourable settlement, or that any settlement will be faithfully carried out.

It is only right that I should give my reasons.

The signatories to the manifesto placed certain proposals before the Conference yesterday. Mr. Gandhi did not accept those resolutions. This morning the Committee, appointed by the Conference, which at his own request—the reason will be apparent later—did not contain himself or any of his followers, framed, however, in consultation with him, resolutions to meet his wishes as far as possible. They also were not accepted by him. In the two long speeches he delivered he defined his own position so far as any conference with the Viceroy is concerned as follows:

"Penitence" on the part of Government must be shown. In order to create a favourable atmosphere the Government must unconditionally retrace all steps they have recently taken; not only cancel the notifications extending certain provisions of law; release all Congress and Khilafat volunteers arrested and convicted but all others convicted recently under what I shall call the ordinary provisions of the Penal Code and the Procedure Code. This later demand was subsequently modified in one particular. This, Mr. Gandhi said, is not due to any sympathy with them but only to create a favourable atmosphere and to show penitence on the part of Government. . . .

He further expressed his opinion, referring no doubt to the Government: "You dare not declare martial law, however far we go." Mr. Gandhi's followers, even those who expressed a mild dissent in some respects, support him in his attitude. . . .

Mr. Gandhi does not want a conference or a settlement except on his own impossible terms . . . .

In regard to the Punjab he emphasized the fact that the Congress party would be satisfied with nothing less than carrying out the proposals made in the Congress Sub-Committee report. It includes not only the punishment of the subordinate officials but the practically impossible condition of the deprivations of pensions of Sir Michael O'Dwyer, Dyer, etc.

With reference to the Khilafat matter, Mr. Gandhi said that the French must leave Syria—of course an impossible condition. They want England to leave Egypt. On this it is not necessary to make any comment.

So far as swaraj is concerned, he wants at once in the central and provincial Governments full Dominion status, as may be determined by the duly elected representatives of the people. For the election of representatives the Congress constitution as to franchise, etc., should be accepted.

He emphasized over and over again that these are the minimum demands which must be accepted by the Government and the Round Table Conference. . . .

The release of some of the convicted persons like the volunteers, the constitution of a tribunal to consider the cases of others are made conditions precedent to holding a conference. I do not object to a tribunal for reconsideration if the Government are willing to accept the suggestion, though all the judges are not to be appointed by Government. This observation does not apply to the cases of the Ali Brothers and others in their position whose (*fatwa* prisoners) release is, however, demanded as an essential preliminary to any conference.

The demand however that certain prisoners should be released before we can agree to such a conference must in my opinion be dropped if we want a conference. I agree that the Government should not interfere with Mr. Gandhi's movement as long as there is no apprehension of any violence. . . .

As regards Messrs Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali and others in that category the Government's position is stronger. It is within the knowledge of Mr. Gandhi and many of us that they do not accept the principle of non-violent agitation. In view of the promise of Mr. Gandhi that he would obtain swaraj within a year if his method of non-violent agitation is followed, they did not press for violence. That year has elapsed, and the Mussulmans feel that the pact with Mr. Gandhi is over . . . . the Mussulmans are not under the restraint of the self-imposed obligations of Mr. Gandhi. . . . they will not hesitate to resort to violence not only against Government but also against others who may not join them in their agitation. Recent occurrences also support this.

All circumstances point to the conclusion that they and their friends will continue the agitation on their release. I do not think it right, therefore, to insist for their unconditional release or make it a condition precedent for the conference with the Government. The only ground of differentiation, the superior obligation to follow the religious injunctions even against the laws of the country, has only to be stated in view of what is happening in Malabar to be discarded. It is on the other hand, a strong argument against unconditional

release which would leave them free to follow a line of conduct declared illegal by the courts and which may be attended by disastrous consequences. An additional reason is the fact that Mr. Gandhi and his friends and the accused themselves welcome the arrest and convictions. I trust, therefore, that I shall not be deemed uncharitable if I state that the demand for the release by them is for the humiliation of Government or to preclude a round table conference as suggested. It is possible that the refusal to release these persons might be used as a pretext for civil disobedience, i.e., non-payment of taxes etc. The movement will then stand naked in all its illegality and hideousness. It is a fitting consummation of a policy which had its origin in false promise of attainment of swaraj within a year—a statement calculated and therefore made to mislead the ignorant masses which all its intelligent supporters must have known to be impossible of attainment . . . .

Being of opinion that I cannot associate with Mr. Gandhi and his followers in asking for a conference or in any other respect, for reasons some of which are given above, and differing from the Conference on these vital questions, on which the Conference agrees with Mr. Gandhi, I have felt bound to leave the Conference, of which I was the speaker. . . .

C. SANKARAN NAIR

The Times of India, 17-1-1922

APPENDIX II

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA "COMMUNIQUE" ON GANDHIJI'S LETTER TO VICEROY

DELHI,
February 6, 1922

The Manifesto issued by Mr. Gandhi on the 4th February justifying his determination to resort to mass civil disobedience contains a series of misstatements. Some of these are so important that the Government of India cannot allow them to pass unchallenged. In the first place, they emphatically repudiate the statement that they have embarked on a policy of lawless repression and also the suggestion that the present campaign of civil disobedience has been forced on the non-co-operation party in order to secure the elementary rights of free association, free speech and of free Press.

In limine, the Government of India desire to draw attention to the fact that the decision to adopt a programme of civil disobedience was finally accepted on the 4th November before the recent notifications relating either to the Seditious Meetings Act or the Criminal Law Amendment Act to which Mr. Gandhi unmistakably refers, were issued. It was in consequence of the serious acts of lawlessness committed by persons who professed to be followers of Mr. Gandhi and the non-co-operation movement that the Government were forced to take

measures which are in strict accordance with the law for protection of peaceful citizens in the pursuit of their lawful avocations. Since the inauguration of the non-co-operation movement the Government of India, actuated by a desire to avoid anything in the nature of recrudescence of political activity even though it was of an extreme character, have restricted their actions in relation thereto to such measures as were necessary for the maintenance of law and order and the preservation of public tranquillity.

Upto November no steps, save in Delhi last year, were taken against the Volunteer Associations. In November, however, the Government were confronted with a new and dangerous situation. In the course of the past year there had been systematic attempts to tamper with the loyalty of the soldiers and the police and there had occurred numerous outbreaks of serious disorder directly attributable to the propaganda of the non-co-operation party amongst the ignorant and excitable masses. These outbreaks had resulted in grave loss of life, the growth of a dangerous spirit of lawlessness and an increasing disregard for lawful authority. In November they culminated in the grave riots in Bombay in which 53 persons lost their lives and approximately 400 were wounded. On the same date, dangerous manifestations of lawlessness occurred in many other places and at this period it became clear that many of the Volunteer Associations had embarked on a systematic campaign of violence, intimidation and obstruction to combat which proceedings under the Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure had proved ineffective.

In these circumstances the Government were reluctantly compelled to resort to measures of a more comprehensive and drastic character.

Nevertheless the operation of the Seditious Meetings Act was strictly limited to a few districts in which the risk of grave disturbances of the peace was specially great and the application of the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1908 was confined to associations, the majority of the members of which had habitually indulged in violence and intimidation. It is impossible here to set out in details the evidence which justified the adoption of these measures in the different provinces. Abundant proof is, however, to be found in the published proceedings of the various legislative bodies, in the *communiqus* of different local Governments, and in the pronouncements of the heads of provinces. While resolute in their determination to enforce respect for law and order and to protect loyal and peaceful subjects of the Crown, the Government have at the same time taken every precaution possible to mitigate where desirable the conditions of imprisonment and to avoid any action which might have the appearance of vindictive severity. Ample proof of this will be found in the orders issued by local Governments. Numerous offenders have been released, sentences have been reduced and special consideration has been shown in the case of persons convicted of offences under the Seditious Meetings Act or the Criminal Law Amendment Act. There is then no shadow of justification for the charge that their policy has been one of indiscriminate and lawless repression.

A further charge which has been brought by Mr. Gandhi is that the recent measures of Government have involved a departure from the civilized policy laid down by His Excellency at the time of the apology of the Ali Brothers, namely, that the Government of India should not interfere with the activities of non-co-operation so long as they remained non-violent in word and deed. The following citation from the *communiqué* of the Government of India issued on the 30th May conclusively disproves the statement. After explaining that in view of the solemn undertaking contained in the statement over their signatures, it had been decided to refrain from instituting criminal proceedings against Messrs Mahomed Ali and Shaukat Ali, the Government of India observed: "It must not be inferred from the original determination of the Government to prosecute for speeches inciting to violence that promoting disaffection of a less violent character is not an offence against the law. The Government of India desire to make it plain that they will enforce the law relating to offences against the State as and when they may think fit against any persons who have committed breaches of it."

It remains with the Government of India to deal with the allegation that His Excellency summarily rejected the proposal for a conference although the terms put forward by the Conference at Bombay and accepted by the Working Committee of the Congress were "quite in keeping with His Excellency's own requirements as indicated in his speech at Calcutta". How far this is far from being the case will be manifested from a comparison of His Excellency's speech with the terms proposed by the Conference. His Excellency in that speech insisted on the imperative necessity as a fundamental condition precedent to the discussion of any question by a conference, of the discontinuance of the unlawful activities of the non-co-operation party. No assurance on this point was, however, contained in the proposals advanced by the Conference. On the contrary whilst the Government were asked to make concessions which not only included the withdrawal of the notifications under the Criminal Law Amendment and Seditious Meetings Acts and the release of persons convicted thereunder, but also the release of the persons convicted of offences designed to affect the loyalty of the army and the submission to an arbitration committee of the cases of other persons convicted under the ordinary law of the land, there was no suggestion that any of the illegal activities of the non-co-operators other than hartals, picketing and civil disobedience should cease. Moreover, it was evident from the statements made by Mr. Gandhi at the Conference that he intended to continue the enrolment of volunteers in prohibited associations and the preparations for civil disobedience. Further Mr. Gandhi also made it apparent that the proposed Round Table Conference would be called merely to register his decrees. It is idle to suggest that terms of this character fulfilled in any way the essentials laid down by His Excellency or can reasonably be described as having been made in response to the sentiments expressed by him.

Finally, the Government of India desire to draw attention to the demands put forward in the concluding paragraph of Mr. Gandhi's present manifesto which exceeded even the demands made by the Working Committee of the Congress. Mr. Gandhi's demands now include, (1) the release of all prisoners convicted or under trial for non-violent activities (2) a guarantee that the Government will refrain from interference with all non-violent activities of the non-co-operation party, even though they fall within the purview of the Indian Penal Code or in other words an undertaking that Government will indefinitely hold in abeyance in regard to the non-co-operators the ordinary and the long established laws of the land. In return for these concessions he indicates that he intends to continue the illegal and seditious propaganda and operations of the non-co-operation party and merely offers to postpone civil disobedience of an aggressive character until the offenders now in jail have had an opportunity of reviewing the whole situation. In the same paragraph he reaffirms the unalterable character of the demands of his party.

The Government of India are confident that all right thinking citizens will recognize that this manifesto constitutes no response whatever to the speech of His Excellency at Calcutta and the demands made are such as no Government could discuss much less accept. The alternatives that now confront the people of India are such as sophistry can no longer obscure or disguise. The issue is no longer between this or that programme of political advance but between lawlessness with all its dangerous consequences on the one hand, and on the other, the maintenance of those principles which lie at the root of all civilized governments. Mass civil disobedience is fraught with such dangers to the State that it must be met with sternness and severity. The Government entertain no doubt that in any measures which they have to take for its suppression they can count on the support and assistance of all law-abiding and loyal citizens of His Majesty.

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CHRONOLOGY

(*December 15, 1921—March 3, 1922*)

December 15 : Gandhiji, in *Young India* article "A Puzzle and Its Solution", declared "the non-co-operators are at war with the Government".
Commenting on the arrest of C. R. Das's wife, appealed to women to take up Government's challenge.
Telegraphed to Sri Prakasa congratulations on the arrest of his father, Babu Bhagwandas.

December 17 : Jawaharlal Nehru was sentenced to 6 months' simple imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 100 under Criminal Law Amendment Act.

December 19 : Gandhiji, in telegram to Malaviya, said that round table conference would be abortive unless Government was truly penitent and fulfilled conditions stated by him.
In telegram to C. R. Das and Abul Kalam Azad, stated conditions for waiving proposed hartal.
S. E. Stokes sentenced to 6 months' simple imprisonment on refusing to furnish security under Sections 124-A and 123-A.
Lala Sankarlal sentenced to 4 months' rigorous imprisonment under Criminal Law Amendment Act.

December 20 : At Ahmedabad, Gandhiji gave interview to Associated Press regarding proposed Round Table Conference.
At Allahabad, security of the *Independent* forfeited.
Krishnakant Malaviya, Editor of *Abhyudaya*, and Govind Malaviya arrested while picketing.
Jairam Saxena, Secretary, U.P. Congress Committee, sentenced to 18 months' rigorous imprisonment.
At Hyderabad, Sind, Jairamdas Daulatram, Secretary, Sind Provincial Congress Committee, arrested under Section 124-A, I.P.C.

On or after *December 20 :* In telegram to Malaviya Gandhiji expressed inability to give undertaking to stop non-co-operation pending proposed Round Table Conference.

December 21 : At Calcutta, deputation led by Malaviya met Viceroy.
Viceroy, replying to deputation said that it was impossible even to consider convening a conference if "agitation in open

and avowed defiance of law" was meanwhile to be continued. C. Rajagopalachari and Arni Subramania Sastri sentenced to 3 months' rigorous imprisonment for civil disobedience of order under Sec. 144.

Krishnakant Malaviya, Chanderkant Malaviya and Govind Malaviya fined Rs. 100 each under Criminal Law Amendment Act.

December 22: First handwritten issue of the *Independent* appeared.

December 23: At Ahmedabad, Gandhiji attended Working Committee meeting which selected Hakim Ajmal Khan as President for forthcoming Congress Session, in absence of C. R. Das, President-elect.

December 24: Mahadev Desai sentenced to one year's rigorous imprisonment for publishing handwritten issue of the *Independent*.

At Ahmedabad, Gandhiji, in interview to Associated Press, regarding Viceroy's speech of December 21, said that Government had to stop its offensive activity aimed at lawful, disciplined non-violent agitation and that there could be no yielding on right of holding public meetings and forming associations.

December 25: In Subjects Committee meeting at Ahmedabad moved main resolution of session.

December 27: Spoke at Subjects Committee meeting.

Open Session of 36th Indian National Congress commenced at Ahmedabad; Gandhiji attended.

Gandhiji attended Khilafat Conference.

December 28: In morning, spoke at Subjects Committee meeting on proposed Round Table Conference.

In open Session, moved resolution on non-violent non-co-operation. Also spoke on Hasrat Mohani's motion on complete independence.

December 29: Gave interview to Congress delegates from Bengal.

In *Young India*, outlined code of behaviour for non-co-operators in jail.

December 30: Gave interview to Congress leaders from U.P.

Attended Muslim League session.

December 31: Attended lecture by Paul Richard at Gujarat Vidyapith; also spoke there.

1922

January 4: Shyam Sunder Chakravarty, editor of the *Servant*, was sentenced to 3 months' simple imprisonment for contempt of court.

January 5 : Writing in *Young India*, Gandhiji described right of free speech and free association as "the immediate issue" before the country.

January 7 : Lajpat Rai and Santanam sentenced to one year's rigorous imprisonment.

January 8 : Writing in *Navajivan*, Gandhiji discussed Khilafat and Muslim League conferences and suggested steps for Hindu-Muslim unity.

January 13 : In Madras, hartal observed on the arrival of Prince of Wales.

Before *January 14* : At Bombay, Gandhiji gave interview to *The Bombay Chronicle* regarding his participation in forthcoming Leaders' Conference.

January 14 : Leaders' Conference commenced in Bombay under Sir Sankaran Nair's chairmanship; Gandhiji spoke. Conference appointed Committee to frame resolutions.

January 15 : In morning Committee appointed by Conference held meeting; Gandhiji attended. Sir Sankaran Nair walked out. In evening Conference was resumed; Sir M. Visveshwarayya elected chairman instead. Gandhiji agreed to postponement of civil disobedience till January 31, 1922, pending negotiations with Viceroy for Round Table Conference.

January 17 : At Bombay, Congress Working Committee considered recommendations of Leaders' Conference and passed resolution postponing "offensive" civil disobedience till January 31, 1922.

Sir Sankaran Nair's letter discussing Leaders' Conference and explaining his standpoint appeared in *The Times of India*. Gandhiji gave interview to *The Bombay Chronicle* regarding Sir Sankaran Nair's letter to *The Times of India*.

January 19 : Gandhiji, in article "Worse than Martial Law" in *Young India*, condemned Government's "savage repression". In another article "Hooliganism in Madras" condemned disturbances during hartal on January 13.

Babu Bhagwandas released.

January 26 : At Ahmedabad, Gandhiji addressed gathering at Satyagraha Ashram.

January 29 : In Bardoli, spoke at Bardoli Taluka Conference; Conference passed resolution that Bardoli Taluka would immediately commence civil disobedience unless Working Committee decided otherwise or unless Round Table Conference was held.

Gandhiji, commenting in *Navajivan* on debate in Central Legislature, declared that position of non-co-operators and that of the Government were "as far apart as the North Pole and the South."

January 30: In letter to *Patels* of Bardoli asked them to submit to him letters of resignation from Government service, for use later.

January 31: At Surat, meeting of Working Committee passed resolution saying that propaganda in foreign countries was absolutely essential.
Gandhiji spoke at public meeting at Surat.
Lajpat Rai, K. Santanam, Malik Khan and Dr. Gopi Chand released; Lajpat Rai rearrested under the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1908.

February 1: Gandhiji, in letter to Viceroy, informed him of Bardoli's decision to commence mass civil disobedience unless Viceroy declared in clear terms policy of absolute non-interference with non-violent activities, freed Press from all administrative control and released all non-violent non-co-operation prisoners.

February 4: At Chauri Chaura, rioting took place; police station attacked and twenty-one policemen and watchmen killed.

February 5: At Bardoli, Gandhiji gave interview to *The Bombay Chronicle* on Bardoli's fitness for civil disobedience.
Issued first of a series of leaflets in Gujarati, addressed to people of Bardoli.

February 6: Government issued *communique* in reply to Gandhiji's letter of February 1 to Viceroy.

February 7: Gandhiji issued to the Press his rejoinder to Government *communique*.

February 8: From Bardoli, sent confidential circular letter to members of Working Committee inviting their opinion on suspension of civil disobedience to be considered at a meeting on February 11.
Hardyal Nag, President, Bengal Provincial Congress Committee, was released unconditionally.

February 9: Ahmedabad Municipality suspended.
Gandhiji, writing in *Young India*, discussed official lawlessness and declared that defensive civil disobedience "must continue at any cost."

February 10 : At Bardoli, Gandhiji in a meeting of Congress Workers announced his decision to stop civil disobedience movement immediately.

February 11 : At Bardoli, meeting of the Working Committee was held.

February 12 : Gandhiji commenced five-day fast as penance for Chauri Chaura incidents.

Resolution passed at Working Committee meeting that in view of Chauri Chaura incidents civil disobedience be suspended.

Writing in *Navajivan*, Gandhiji deplored the Chauri Chaura incidents.

In another article, reiterated conditions to be observed by people for obtaining swaraj.

February 14 : The Prince of Wales arrived in Delhi.

February 15 : At Bardoli, Gandhiji gave interview to *The Bombay Chronicle* on his future programme.

In letter to Sir Daniel Hamilton, stressed importance of the spinning-wheel for India.

In England, House of Lords resolved to appoint a Standing Joint Committee of the Lords and Commons on Indian affairs.

February 16 : In *Young India* Gandhiji wrote on "The Crime of Chauri Chaura".

February 19 : Wrote to Jawaharlal Nehru explaining Working Committee's resolution suspending civil disobedience.

February 22 : Wrote to Chairman, A.I.C.C., saying that establishing agency in any foreign country for disseminating news about the political situation in India was undesirable just then.

February 23 : Sir William Vincent made statement in Assembly on Government's policy regarding Non-co-operation Movement.

February 24 : At Delhi, A.I.C.C. meeting commenced.

Viceroy gave assent to Bill for repeal of Repressive Laws.

February 25 : At Delhi, A.I.C.C. meeting adopted with modifications Working Committee's resolutions passed at Bardoli on February 12.

February 26 : At Delhi, Gandhiji gave interview to Press on A.I.C.C. meeting and its resolutions.

March 3 : Jawaharlal Nehru and six others released from Lucknow Jail before expiry of their term.

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